

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

The rise and decline of the Nicaraguan revolution

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April 25, 1994

Premier quits, increasing instability in Japan

BY ROBERT MILLER

The sudden announcement April 8 by Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa that he would resign increases the political instability facing Japan's rulers. Hosokawa quit as trade tensions with Washington have sharpened and Japan is mired in its worst recession since World War II.

"With Japan's economy struggling to bounce off the bottom, the last thing the investors want is a political crisis," said banker Hideo Ishihara.

Following reports of the impending resignation, the Japanese stock exchange lost 370 points, plunging 2 percent in less than 10 minutes.

Hosokawa resigned after being pressed by the opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) about his financial dealings. The LDP also blocked passage by Parliament of the national budget that was supposed to jump start the economy.

The Japanese prime minister admitted that he took a loan of nearly \$1 million from the trucking company Sagawa Kyubin in 1982. He said the interest was diverted and

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ANC rejects proposal to postpone elections

BY VED MANGA

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — Emergency security measures are being stepped up in Natal province, which includes the KwaZulu Bantustan, to ensure that free and fair elections take place April 26-28.

The measures, including added troop deployments, followed the April 8 summit between African National Congress president Nelson Mandela, South African presi-

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U.S. warplanes carry out bombing raids in Bosnia

Washington deepens war on European continent

BY PAT SMITH

Taking a step that threatens to qualitatively deepen the first war on the European continent in nearly half a century, Washington began carrying out bombing raids in the former Yugoslavia.

U.S. warplanes attacked targets near Gorazde, Bosnia, April 10 and 11. The U.S. air strikes by F-16 and F/A-18A fighter jets, about 30 miles southeast of Sarajevo, were carried out under the NATO banner. But statements by National Security adviser Anthony Lake and other White House officials prior to the air raids left no doubt that the Clinton administration called the shots. On April 7 Lake stated that "neither the president nor any of his senior advisers rules out the use of air power" in Gorazde. Capitalist politicians and bourgeois commentators lined up firmly behind Clinton's aggressive actions.

The bombings were the second offensive military action carried out in Europe in the name of NATO in its 45-year history. The first such operation took place six weeks earlier, when U.S. fighter planes shot down four attack jets, flown by pilots linked to the Serbian regime in Belgrade, for violating a NATO-enforced "no-fly zone" over Bosnia.

Gorazde, populated mostly by Muslims, had been under siege for 13 days by rightist Serb militias led by Radovan Karadzic. The Belgrade-supported forces currently hold 70 percent of Bosnia's territory. They sought control of the city to place themselves in the best position to win acceptance for broader territorial gains when stalled negotiations to partition the republic resume. Gorazde is strategically located on a highway connecting Belgrade with the Adriatic coast.

More than 150 people were killed and about 650 wounded in Karadzic's latest assault on Gorazde. The rightists' shelling forced many of the 65,000 residents to flee the city, which was designated last year by the United Nations Security Council as one of six "safe areas" that could be protected by "all necessary means including the use of force."

The April 8 *New York Times* reported

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U.S. president Bill Clinton and Defense Secretary William Perry. Washington's bombings will deepen war in Bosnia. Below, US. F-16 takes off from NATO base in Italy.

Teamsters stand firm in fight with trucking bosses

BY JON HILLSON

BLAINE, Minnesota — After just one week, the nationwide Teamsters strike is having an impact on several trucking firms. Seventy-five thousand workers struck 22 companies organized by Trucking Management Inc. (TMI) on April 6.

Churchill Truck Lines, the financially weakest of the struck firms, announced April 11 that it was going out of business. President Kenneth Churchill blamed "the economic impact of the strike" for his decision to lay off more than 1,500 Teamsters and 560 nonunion employees.

National Teamsters spokesman Bernie Mulligan countered this claim, stating that the workers had already taken a 10 percent pay cut last year, which amounted to a \$3 million gift to the company.

"Everyone in the industry knows Churchill was on the edge," said striker Ted Meyers, a picket captain for Teamsters Local 120 here in Blaine, a suburb of St. Paul, Minnesota. "The 'blame the strike' rhetoric is a scam to turn people against the union

for supposedly forcing people out onto the street. There are other haulers in the same shape as Churchill," Meyers concluded.

The Teamsters union also said its members would return to work at Preston, a Maryland-based subsidiary of Yellow Corp., after the company agreed to pull out of TMI. A Preston spokesperson said they had decided to withdraw due to financial hardship from the strike.

The strike, the first national Teamsters walkout in 15 years, is also affecting movement of automobile parts, small manufactured goods, products moving to retail stores, and nonperishable items destined for supermarkets.

The Teamsters are striking against attempts by the trucking bosses to employ thousands of part-time workers — up to 24 percent of the workforce — who would gradually replace full-time employees. Part-timers would earn only half the top wage of full-time employees, currently \$17 an hour. They would be forced to pay into their own

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Tel Aviv seals West Bank, Gaza

The Israeli government tightened travel restrictions to bar 1.8 million Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip from entering Israel April 7-14. Police Commissioner Rafi Peled said all permits for Palestinian workers had been canceled and no cars would be allowed in from the occupied territories. Some 60,000 Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza work in Israel. Tel Aviv said it closed the border in response to the April 6 car bombing that killed eight people in Afula, Israel. Hamas, a Palestinian group that opposes last September's accord between the Israeli government and the Palestine Liberation Organization, claimed responsibility for the blast, saying it sought revenge for the February 25 massacre in the West Bank city of Hebron.

"The border closing is to be prolonged," stated Israeli Agriculture Minister Yaacov Tzur April 10. Tel Aviv agreed to grant six month visas to about 15,000 construction workers from Eastern Europe and 3,200 farmhands, most likely immigrants from Thailand and Turkey.

Referendum at Air France

Air France management said a referendum of the company's 40,000 staff resulted in an 81 percent vote in favor of a concession package. Eight of the fourteen unions at Air France had rejected the pact before the vote. The package proposed by chairman Christian Blanc would cut 5,000 jobs through attrition if it is implemented. Management's proposal would also freeze wages and calls for a 30 percent increase in productivity.

Transit workers strike in Paris

Ten of the 11 unions at France's state-run transportation system organized a one-day walkout in the region that includes Paris. Workers were protesting government plans to "reform" the area's transit system. About half of the capital's subway lines were shut during the morning rush hour, less than 15 percent of metro trains and buses operated,



Israeli soldiers chase Palestinians in Ramallah on West Bank. Tel Aviv sealed Israeli borders to 1.8 million Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip the second week of April.

and the streets were clogged with traffic.

IRA weapons charges dropped

After a prosecutor admitted he couldn't prove the allegations, U.S. district judge John Roll threw out five of six charges against a man accused of conspiring to ship explosive detonators to the Irish Republican Army. Patrick Moley still faces a conspiracy charge for allegedly helping to buy mining detonators in Tucson, Arizona, and trying to purchase a missile and several rifles in Florida. Roll asked the prosecution what evidence linked Moley to those charges. "I don't think there is any, your honor," replied assistant U.S. attorney Robert Miskell. Moley's five codefendants still face trial.

U.S. gov't plans smoking ban

U.S. labor secretary Robert Reich has proposed banning smoking on the job. The plan applies to more than 6 million indoor workplaces. If companies allow smoking, they must provide a designated smoking area with outside ventilation. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) spokesman James Foster said, "This regulation would apply to private-sector employ-

ers everywhere and to public-sector employers in the 25 states and territories... that have their own OSHA programs."

Thousands march in Mexico

Tens of thousands of demonstrators in Mexico City turned the April 10 commemoration of revolutionary hero Emiliano Zapata's assassination into a protest against the government of President Carlos Salinas, particularly against its agrarian policies. Police estimated the size of the demonstration at 11,000 but organizers said more than 50,000 workers and peasants marched. The State Council of Indian and Peasant Organizations, a coalition of 280 groups, sponsored the march. Protesters shouted slogans in support of Zapata and the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), which led the rebellion in Chiapas at the beginning of this year. Demonstrators also demanded the resignation of Mexico's president, autonomy for indigenous peoples, and repeal of a 1992 law that ended the policy of land distribution to landless peasants.

Peasants protest in Paraguay

More than 25,000 peasants marched in Paraguay's capital, Asunción, March 15 while thousands of rural workers blockaded main roads to the cities. Protesters demanded a higher price for cotton — the country's main export crop — expropriation and distribution of unused land, cancellation of debts, and implementation of an agrarian reform.

More than 40 percent of Paraguay's cultivable land is in the hands of about 350 landowners, while 80 percent of the peasants hold no titles to land. The country's three main trade unions have called a general strike for May 2, which will be the first such action there in 36 years.

Workers and farmers demonstrate in Argentina

Textile workers who in February took

over the Textile Santiaguena plant in Santiago del Estero, in northern Argentina, were attacked by police and forcibly evicted. Workers said they occupied the bankrupt factory to defend their jobs.

One thousand government workers and teachers marched in Santiago February 16 to protest the government's wage policy. Unions announced plans for future demonstrations. Thousands of state workers, demanding back pay, burned down government buildings in this northern province last December.

The Argentine government asked its military intelligence service to evaluate the potential for political and social explosions in other provinces as workers and farmers continue protests throughout the country. More than 1,500 public workers and teachers marched on the government house in San Salvador de Jujuy March 29 demand-

ing a wage increase. Police shot at demonstrators with tear gas and rubber bullets, injuring 11. Union representatives said they would continue their fight to end the three-year wage freeze, including through work stoppages. Gov. José Ficooseco sent a draft bill to the Jujuy provincial legislature restructuring public workers' wages, which would represent a 50 percent increase for the lowest paid workers.

Working farmers, upset by high taxes and low prices for their crops, protested in late February. They blocked a major highway about 80 miles from Posadas on the road that links Misiones province with the Brazilian border.

China expands stock listings

One of China's two stock exchanges plans to list more than \$80 million worth of new B-shares, which are offered exclusively to investors from abroad and are traded in hard currency. One of China's top automakers, Jiangxi Isuzu Automobile Corp., will be listed along with the Guangdong Power Industry Corp. The B-share market has been in a steady decline recently, falling by more than two points a week.

Private sector grows in China

The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences released findings of the first survey of the country's private sector. Private enterprise, 41 percent of which is service firms, represents the fastest growing part of China's economy. In mid-1993 there were 184,000 private businesses, employing 3 million people, still a tiny percentage of the labor force in a country with a population of 1.2 billion. State enterprises remain the country's main employer.

— PAT SMITH

William Jungers from Los Angeles contributed to this week's column.

THE MILITANT

Defend abortion rights

Pro-choice activists chalked up another victory for women's rights by keeping the clinics open in Birmingham, Alabama. 'Militant' reporters were on the scene providing eyewitness accounts of the defeat youth and workers handed Operation Rescue. The 'Militant' covers the battles to defend a woman's right to choose abortion, clinic-by-clinic. Don't miss a single issue!



Hundreds defend Philadelphia clinics against Operation Rescue, July 1993.

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Conflict in Rwanda is not a 'tribal' war

BY SARA LOBMAN

Twenty thousand people have been killed in fighting in the central African country of Rwanda in the five days following the death of President Juvénal Habyarimana. The Rwandan president and President Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi were killed April 6 when their plane was hit by gunfire. The two were returning from a meeting in Tanzania to discuss the ongoing fighting between rival groups vying for power in the interests of privileged professionals, wealthy merchants, and other capitalists in both countries.

About 600 troops from the opposition Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) have been camped out in the capital city of Kigali as a result of an earlier truce with the government. The RPF claims more than 20,000 troops nationwide. After Habyarimana's death, army forces — who accused the opposition group of the assassination — at-

tacked the RPF, triggering more widespread fighting. By April 11, more than 2,000 additional RPF troops were advancing on the city.

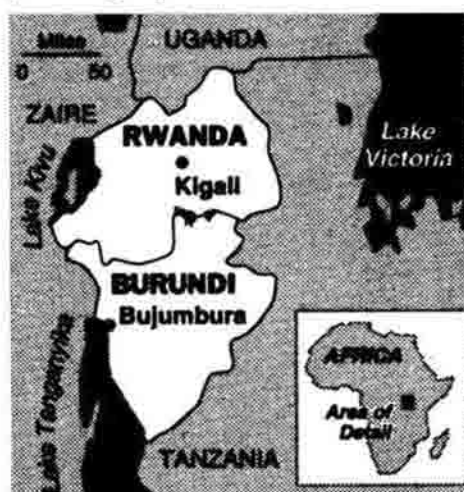
Habyarimana, who seized the presidency in a 1973 coup, signed a peace accord with the RPF in August 1993. Last month, Habyarimana postponed the swearing in of a new transitional government that was to include five ministers from the RPF.

As thousands of working people in Kigali and other parts of the country fell victim to the massive violence, French and Belgian troops rushed to the Rwandan capital to evacuate citizens of those countries. Four hundred French paratroopers took control of the airport in Kigali April 9.

Both the Belgian and French rulers have a long history of imperialist domination and exploitation in the region. The Belgian government, which was the colonial power in Rwanda and Burundi until independence was won in 1962, has been accused by Rwandan government officials of supplying weapons to the RPF. Paris, on the other hand, sent 600 troops to aid the government in October 1990 after RPF forces based in Uganda invaded. The French troops were later replaced with 2,500 United Nations "peacekeepers," who remain in the country to this day.

Not a tribal war

Journalists and commentators in the big-business media have invariably described the carnage in Rwanda and Burundi as the result of a centuries-old tribal war between the Hutus and Tutsis. The president of Rwanda is Hutu, while forces in the RPF come largely from the Tutsi tribe. An article in the April 11 *New York Times*, for example, called the



Hundreds of thousands of refugees who have fled the fighting are scattered throughout Rwanda. Pictured above are residents of the Ngoma camp in southern Rwanda.

fighting "one more round of the tribal blood-letting that has plagued this part of Africa for centuries." Another *Times* article two days earlier emphasized the physical differences between the members of the two tribes. "The Tutsis," it said, are "tall and elegant," while the Hutus are "short and stocky."

David Gakunzi, a native of Burundi and editor of *Coumbite*, a French-language magazine on politics in Africa and the Caribbean that was published in Paris, has put forward an opposite view. In a 1988 interview with the *Militant*, he explained that the conflict between rival groups in the region was "political and social," not tribal.

"You do not have a situation where all the Tutsi are in power and all the Hutu are poor," he said. "You have Tutsis and Hutus who are bourgeois, Tutsis and Hutus who are peasants and suffering."

As a result of years of colonial rule and imperialist exploitation, Rwanda and Burundi are two of the poorest countries in the world. Life expectancy is 48 years in Burundi and 46 in Rwanda. At least half the population is illiterate. Some coffee is grown for export, but most agriculture is subsistence farming of plantains, cassava, and sweet potatoes. There is little industry. Competition for control of land appears to be at the heart of much of the fighting.

The territory that today makes up Rwanda and Burundi was part of German East Africa from 1899 until the end of World War I when, under the name Ruanda-Urundi, the League of Nations declared it a Belgian colony. The Belgian ruling class took advantage of existing tribal divisions to maintain its rule, building a power base among the feudal aristocracy that was drawn primarily from the Tutsi tribe. Ninety percent of the population in Rwanda is of Hutu origin. Less than 10 percent is Tutsi. The composition of the population in Burundi is similar.

These divisions persist today. In Rwanda, for example, everyone is required to carry an ID card that lists their tribal affiliation.

In the decade and a half following World War II, toilers in countries across Africa won political independence from the imperialist powers. In Rwanda, a 1959 uprising — involving people from both tribal backgrounds — wrested control of most government functions from the Belgian-supported government, which was still dominated by members of the Tutsi tribe.

But the toilers did not take power in their own hands following independence. In Burundi, government power after 1962 continued to be exercised by the section of the local bourgeoisie that came primarily from among members of the Tutsi tribe. Ntaryamira and his predecessor, who was elected in 1993 and killed in a coup later that year, were the first Hutus to hold the presidency. The army in Burundi is still controlled by the former ruling clique, who are primarily Tutsi.

Unlike Burundi, the local bourgeoisie that came to power in Rwanda was based on a small layer of Hutu elite. Habyarimana was born into one of these ruling families. He entered the military in 1960 and became president in 1973 after leading a military coup against then-president Grégoire Kayibanda. According to the *New York Times*, Habyarimana "excelled at strengthening ties to the West and attracting foreign aid and investment."

U.S. jets launch bombing raids in Bosnia

Continued from front page

fighting in Sarajevo "with an intensity not witnessed in several weeks." The capital had been calm since February when rightist Serb forces besieging Sarajevo agreed to a cease-fire. However, Karadzic's forces tightened their blockade of the capital following the air strikes and placed mines around the UN weapons collection areas outside the city.

Meanwhile, representatives of the Bosnian government of Alija Izetbegovic and Bosnian Croats signed an agreement March 1 to unite parts of Bosnia under their control and join in a loose union with Croatia. Bosnian prime minister Haris Silajdzic; Croatia's foreign minister, Mate Granic; and Kresimir Zubak representing Bosnian Croats signed an accord to create a federation of municipalities made up of areas in Bosnia with majority Muslim and Croat populations.

The federation will form an economic and financial alliance with the Republic of Croatia. The two sides ended nearly a year of fighting with a cease-fire agreement in February. Clinton administration officials heralded the accord but acknowledged that as the military victors in the Bosnian war, Karadzic's forces have little reason to join the federation.

The use of U.S. warplanes in the April 10-11 bombing attack followed a public debate in the Clinton administration on the use of U.S. military might in Gorazde. During an April 3 television interview, Defense Secretary William Perry said Washington "will not enter the war to stop" the fall of Gorazde. The following day Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a Pentagon news conference, "Right now, it is our judgment that conditions in Gorazde do not lend themselves to the use of air power."

Three days before the U.S. bombing, however, National Security Adviser Anthony Lake repudiated these statements by top military officials.

U.S. president Bill Clinton called the bombing "a clear call to the Serbs to pull back from Gorazde and resume the negotiations." The big-business press lined up behind Washington's actions.

"The dispatch of U.S. planes for NATO air strikes against Serbian tanks and command positions around Gorazde Sunday and again yesterday seems a risk emphatically worth taking," the *New York Times* editors wrote April 12.

The same day, a *Wall Street Journal* editorial said, "Certainly, the Clinton Administration should be congratulated for finally hardening its attitude toward Serb aggression." Reflecting the debate among U.S. rulers over how much force to use, the *Journal* editors added, "More serious measures most likely will be needed to deter the Serbs."

When asked if he would use force to push the rightist Serb forces back, Lt. Gen. Michael Rose, the commander of the 13,000 UN troops in Bosnia, said, "Absolutely not."

Moscow not consulted

The U.S. bombing raids increased tensions between Washington and Moscow. Russian foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev said it had been a "big mistake" to launch air attacks without consulting Moscow. He called the decision a hasty one that had failed to take account of all the consequences.

"I insisted to Clinton time and again that such decisions cannot be taken without prior consultation between the United States and Russia," President Boris Yeltsin said.

The Russian government continues to assert its diplomatic role in the conflict as an ally of the Serbian regime and the forces allied to it in Bosnia. Karadzic refused to meet with U.S. negotiator Charles Redman following the U.S. air strike. Serb rightists said they would only deal with the United Nations through Vitaly Churkin, the Russian special envoy.

Karadzic's forces enthusiastically greeted Russian troops who moved into the area near Sarajevo in February following a UN-brokered cease-fire. While Washington and its European rivals publicly welcomed the presence of Russia troops, they expressed alarm at Moscow's new role. "Taken by surprise, Washington has little immediate choice but to accept Moscow's *fait accompli*," said a February 19 *New York Times* editorial.

While U.S. bombings in Bosnia are likely to draw Washington and other imperialist powers into deeper military involvement in the conflict there, the presence of U.S. troops elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia can become equally explosive.

A March 17 report by the CATO Institute, a ruling class think-tank based in Washington, D.C., said concerns of U.S. military involvement in the former Yugoslavia have mainly centered on the conflict in Bosnia.

But a report by their director of foreign policy studies, Ted Carpenter, concluded, "Keeping U.S. troops as a tripwire 'peacekeeping' force in Macedonia is increasingly risky." Carpenter said the 500 U.S. soldiers stationed in Macedonia face the prospect of being embroiled in armed conflict spilling over from Kosovo, Serbia, or from "expansionist ambitions of Albania, Bulgaria, and Greece as well as Serbia."

Athens closed its border to Macedonia in February, shortly after Washington extended diplomatic recognition to the former Yugoslav republic. The Greek government has since organized demonstrations of tens of thousands of people around the world in defense of its embargo, including a rally of 1 million in the northern Greek port city of Salonika in early April.

Seventy percent of Macedonia's trade passes through Greek ports. Athens's stated aim is to pressure its neighbor to change its name, flag, and constitution. The Greek government claims the use of the name Macedonia by the former Yugoslav republic implies territorial claims on the northern Greek province of the same name. The actions by Athens, a member of NATO and the European Union, have strained its relations with Washington and with members of the European Union that had earlier recognized Macedonia as well.

The Truth About Yugoslavia

WHY WORKING PEOPLE SHOULD OPPOSE INTERVENTION

George Fyson, Argiris Malapanis, and Jonathan Silberman

The carnage in Yugoslavia is the product of the crisis of the depression-ridden world capitalist system. Rival gangs of would-be capitalists — fragments of the former Yugoslav Stalinist regime — are fighting a war for territory and resources. Far from displaying any humanitarian concern, the U.S. and European powers are intervening militarily to advance their competing interests. \$8.95



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All out for sales target week!

BY PAT SMITH

Supporters of the socialist periodicals in many cities report ambitious plans to use the April 16-24 target week to close the gap in the international drive and end the week on schedule.

Militant, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New International* distributors across the United States made a special effort this week to introduce the socialist periodicals to members of the Teamsters union who are on strike against 20 trucking companies in the United States.

Striking Teamsters in central Pennsylvania welcomed the *Militant* at their picket lines when distributors visited to express solidarity with their fight. After introducing the socialist paper to the truckers they were asked to join the picket line. "We're fighting for the future," a picket captain in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, told *Militant* salespeople.

Members of Teamsters Local 776 bought one subscription and 14 copies of the socialist paper in two days. Strikers at the New Penn facility in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, told the *Militant* they have signed up as Teamsters members 35 percent of the workers at New Penn's nonunion operation, which borders the union site. All eight pickets at the gate bought copies of the *Militant*.

Danny Booher, a textile worker in Boston, sold five subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, two subscriptions to the *Militant*, and one copy of *Nueva Internacional* to coworkers one day last week. He and his coworkers have been working 12-hour shifts in an International Ladies' Garment Workers Union-organized shop. Booher says he and several young workers he hadn't met before started talking about the world. "Soon, we were discussing everything from the elections in South Africa and the U.S. government's threats against North Korea to trade wars between Washington, Japan, and Germany," he said.

Plans for target week

Distributors in San Francisco plan to stay ahead of schedule and raise their *Militant* goal to contribute to the international effort,



Striking steelworker at Allegheny Ludlum plant in Brackenridge, Pennsylvania, checks out the *Militant*.

which is still short of the 3,000 goal. Jim Gotesky says salespeople will travel to Fresno and Stockton, California, where large numbers of Teamsters and farm workers live. Some supporters of the drive are taking days off work to spend all day selling to students and unionists. An auto worker who helps distribute the socialist publications, for example, will travel to Peoria, Illinois, to introduce the *Militant* to unionists while building a rally of Caterpillar workers there.

The *Militant* encourages all readers who come out of the target week on or ahead of schedule to consider raising their goals.

Militant salespeople in Pittsburgh have laid out some serious projections to shift the subscription sales effort into high gear. Gerardo Sánchez reports several readers are spending two full days at mine portals and campuses in the region to get the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New International* into the hands of workers and students there. They have invited distributors from other cities to join them in this effort. They

are also planning day-long teams on campuses in the city and will continue to introduce the paper to steelworkers on strike against Allegheny Ludlum Steel.

Janet Post in Miami writes that participants at a statewide conference to oppose the U.S. embargo against Cuba purchased eight copies of the *New International*, two *Militant* subscriptions, and \$250 worth of Pathfinder literature. Campaign supporters there raised their goal for the Marxist magazine after selling 19 copies this week.

Readers should note the international goal for sales of *New International* has been raised from 1,000 to 1,800. Many distributors, anticipating a good response to the publication of issue no. 9 of the magazine, "The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution," have raised their goals, bringing the total to more than 1,600. Readers in several other cities are discussing higher targets. To be counted on next week's chart, new goals should be reported to the *Militant* business office by Tuesday, 12 noon EDT.

SWP leader condemns Washington's, Tokyo's aggression against N. Korea

Printed below are greetings by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes to North Korean president Kim Il Sung on the occasion of the April 15 national holiday in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).



On behalf of the Socialist Workers Party, I send communist greetings to you and the Korean people on this national day of celebration. Our party reaffirms its internationalist solidarity with your struggle against Washington's and Tokyo's aggression and its commitment to defense of the sovereignty and unity of the Korean peninsula.

We mark this anniversary by standing with the Korean people in condemning the U.S. government's continued provocations against the DPRK, from threats of trade sanctions to the reinstitution of the Team Spirit military exercises. The White House hypocritically demands that Pyongyang open its nuclear facilities to more and more "inspections," while Washington, Seoul,

and Tokyo are exempt.

Using an arrogant imperial double standard, the U.S. rulers condemn the DPRK, while at the same time they push their own imperialist competitors in Japan and Germany to rearm more rapidly and to spend an increasing percentage of their national budgets on armies and strategic armaments. Only the willfully blind can fail to see the long-term nuclear ambitions imbedded in the plans of Berlin and Tokyo.

Washington's hypocrisy

Washington, the biggest nuclear power on earth, has been the only government in the world to use atomic weapons. More than 100,000 residents of Japan were killed or maimed in that horrendous crime against humanity. It is the U.S. government, not Pyongyang, that poses a nuclear threat to safety of workers and farmers in Asia and around the world. Right now, in fact, Washington is carrying out bombing raids in the former Yugoslavia, as imperialism deepens the

first war on the European continent in nearly half a century, and does it at the cost of tens of thousands of lives.

The U.S. government has misjudged the determination of the working people of Korea to defend the country's national sovereignty and advance the fight for reunification. Thousands of youth in the South continue to protest the presence of U.S. troops and the deployment of Patriot missiles there. Not only Koreans throughout the peninsula, but millions of people elsewhere in Asia and around the world are opposed to Washington's provocative actions that could engulf your country in a devastating war.

Our party stands in solidarity with the Korean people and your struggle for peace, reunification, and an end to the decades-long nuclear blackmail held over your head by Washington and its junior partner in Seoul. We pledge to continue to tell the truth about Korea and join with other young people and workers in opposing U.S. aggression.

WHERE WE STAND end of week five

39% SOLD 1,166 **50% SHOULD BE 1,500**

	THE MILITANT		%	Perspectiva Mundial		%	NEW INTERNATIONAL	
	SOLD	GOAL		SOLD	GOAL		SOLD	GOAL
ICELAND	9	12	75%	0	1		0	6
NEW ZEALAND								
Auckland	53	85	62%	2	6		4	40*
Christchurch	25	45	56%	1	2		2	20*
N.Z. Total	78	130	60%	3	8		6	60
AUSTRALIA	14	25	56%	4	8		13	15*
BRITAIN								
Manchester	34	50	68%	0	5		10	30*
London	27	60	45%	0	2		15	40*
Sheffield	10	35	29%	0	2		3	20*
Britain Total	71	145	49%	0	9		28	90
SWEDEN	19	40	48%	11	18		6	30
CANADA								
Toronto	35	80	44%	8	15		3	40
Vancouver	33	75	44%	8	10		4	45
Montreal	21	75	28%	10	20		8	70
Canada Total	89	230	39%	26	45		15	155
UNITED STATES								
Albany	4	5	80%	1	1		0	4*
Greensboro, NC	31	50	62%	0	5		8	22*
Albuquerque	3	5	60%	2	1		1	3*
Detroit	50	90	56%	2	10		19	40*
Atlanta	41	80	51%	11	13		18	35*
Houston	33	65	51%	5	12		19	15
San Francisco	69	135	51%	15	32		35	105*
Salt Lake City, UT	45	90	50%	1	15		1	55*
Miami	54	120	45%	13	50		49	95*
Washington, D.C.	34	75	45%	12	25		18	35*
Boston	50	120	42%	21	40		14	80*
Los Angeles	83	200	42%	38	95		19	90
Chicago	52	130	40%	13	30		0	30
Seattle	29	75	39%	5	12		19	35*
Des Moines, IA	26	80	33%	13	35		18	55*
New Haven, CT	5	15	33%	1	3		1	10*
Twin Cities, MN	34	110	31%	5	17		38	65*
Denver	3	10	30%	0	2		0	3
Birmingham, AL	22	75	29%	1	5		9	35*
Philadelphia	33	115	29%	5	30		23	65*
St. Louis	20	70	29%	3	8		14	35*
Brooklyn	36	130	28%	11	35		40	110*
New York	38	135	28%	7	35		44	110*
Cincinnati, OH	4	15	27%	3	2		4	8*
Newark, NJ	33	130	25%	4	35		29	45
Cleveland	20	85	24%	2	10		0	17
Edinboro, PA	2	10	20%	1	0		0	3*
Pittsburgh	20	100	20%	3	10		1	40*
Morgantown, WV	8	50	16%	0	2		9	30*
Portland, OR	0	6	0%	0	0		0	2*
U.S. Total	879	2,371	37%	196	569		449	1,274*
BELGIUM	1	3	33%	2	4		2	5*
GREECE	3	10	30%	0	1		1	5
FRANCE	2	10	20%	4	2		2	12
GERMANY	1	10	10%	0	4		4	10
PUERTO RICO	0	2	0%	5	8		4	12
TOTAL	1,166	2,988	39%	251	677		530	1,674
SHOULD BE	1,500	3,000	50%	325	650		900	1,800

IN THE UNIONS

NEW ZEALAND								
UFBGWU	5	6	83%	0	—		0	1
EU	6	9	67%	1	—		0	2
MWU	1	4	25%	0	2		0	2
N.Z. Total	12	19	63%	1	2		0	5
AUSTRALIA								
AMEU	0	4	0%	0	—		3	—
FPU	0	2	0%	0	—		2	—
NUW	0	2	0%	0	—		1	—
Australia Total	0	8	0%	0	—		6	—
BRITAIN								
TGWU	3	7	43%	0	—		0	2
AEEU	1	—	—	0	—		0	—
NUM	1	—	—	0	—		0	—
RMT	15	—	—	0	—		1	—
Britain Total	19	—	—	0	—		1	—
SWEDEN								
Food workers	1	3	33%	0	—		0	2
Metal workers	0	3	0%	0	—		0	2
Transport workers	0	2	0%	0	—		0	1
Sweden Total	1	8	13%	0	—		0	5
CANADA								
CAW	5	9	56%	4	5		1	4
ACTWU	2	4	50%	1	2		0	2
IAM	9	19	47%	3	2		1	6
USWA	1	11	9%	1	2		0	10
Canada Total	17	43	40%	9	11		2	22
UNITED STATES								
ILGWU	8	12	67%	8	24		0	8
UTU	35	72	49%	1	3		0	22
IAM	25	80	31%	2	15		1	25
OCAW	21	70	30%	0	5		1	25
UAW	38	125	30%	5	10		5	30
UFCW	10	35	29%	9	20		1	15
USWA	16	70	23%	1	8		2	21
UMWA	3	20	15%	0	—		0	—
ACTWU	6	—	—	5	—		2	—
U.S. Total	162	484	33%	31	85		12	146

* = raised goal

ACTWU — Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AFMEU — Automotive, Food, Metals and Engineering Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers; EU — Engineers Union; FPU — Food Preservers' Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; ILGWU — International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; NUM — National Union of Mineworkers; NUW — National Union of Workers; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union

The rise and decline of the Nicaraguan revolution

Printed below is the introduction to the latest issue of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. Titled "The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution," issue no. 9 of this journal came off the press April 1. Copyright © 408 Printing and Publishing Corp., reprinted by permission.

BY STEVE CLARK

On July 19, 1980, Cuban president Fidel Castro spoke in Managua to the half million participants swelling the celebration of the first anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution. "I'm sure you all realize what it means, the impression, the happiness, the enthusiasm, the optimism, the emotion involved in arriving at the second Latin American country to free itself from imperialism," he said.

One week later in Cuba, Castro spoke to the participants, including enthusiastic delegations of international guests, gathered at the annual rally marking the anniversary of the 1953 assault on the Moncada garrison that opened the Cuban revolution. "In this hemisphere there are now not two but three of us, because Grenada also has to be included. . . . [The] three of us have shaken the yoke of imperialism in the last twenty years in a radical way, once and for all."

"One must have a sense of history to know . . . what revolution means here, next to the imperialist monster," Castro had told delegates to the Third Congress of the Federation of Cuban Women a few months earlier in March 1980. "Yes, what the Cuban revolution and its firm, unwavering line has meant. One needs a sense of history and of realities to understand the merit of the Sandinista revolution, the merit of the Grenadian revolution."

"Grenada, Nicaragua, and Cuba are three giants rising up to defend their right to independence, sovereignty, and justice, on the very threshold of imperialism."

What had "shaken the yoke of imperialism in a radical way" was the extension of the socialist revolution in the Americas, a socialist revolution opened two decades earlier with the triumph of the workers and farmers of Cuba. That victory electrified revolutionary-minded workers, farmers, and youth throughout the Americas. In marked contrast, the world's wealthiest and most powerful capitalist class, speaking with a single bipartisan voice from Washington and Wall Street, reacted to the victory of the Cuban toilers and to their government's expropriation of the U.S. and domestic exploiters in 1960 with an uncompromising hostility that has never ceased being the touchstone of U.S. government policy toward Cuba.

In 1979 workers and farmers in both Nicaragua and Grenada did even more than oust corrupt and brutal tyrants who had sold these nations' patrimony to Washington. They displaced from political power the entire class of exploiting landowners and big businessmen, ushering in popular revolutionary governments that began to encroach on capitalist economic prerogatives and social relations that deprive the toiling majority of the social wealth they create and that reproduce the horrors of capitalism generation after generation. The toilers of Grenada, led by the New Jewel Movement, and of Nicaragua, led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), reignited the revolutionary enthusiasm and commitment born of the Cuban revolution, as they confirmed in life that "only the workers and peasants will go all the way" — the battle cry of Augusto César Sandino, who led the fight for Nicaragua's national sovereignty against Yankee domination in the 1920s and early 1930s.

The U.S. rulers, for their part, were determined to act to prevent the ultimate threat to the power and prerogatives of the property in the Americas — the development of two "new Cubas" in the Western Hemisphere.

During the initial years of the Nicaraguan revolution, the FSLN leadership, despite errors and political hesitations, pursued a course that promoted the organization and mobilization of the workers and peasants of Nicaragua. The new government increasingly used its power to advance



Sandinista fighters entering Managua on July 19, 1979, celebrate triumph of workers and peasants revolution.

the toilers' class interests against the exploiters both at home and abroad. These actions gave a boost to popular struggles against the U.S.-backed landlord-capitalist tyrannies in El Salvador and Guatemala, linked up with the revolution in Grenada, and gave a powerful new impetus to political leaps forward by the workers in Cuba.

"Today it is the heroic workers and peasants of Nicaragua who are on the front lines of the advancing world socialist revolution," the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of the United States affirmed in a resolution on the Nicaraguan revolution adopted soon after the July 1979 triumph and printed in this issue of *New International*. "We will be tested by our capacity to respond with courage and decisiveness, to throw our forces into this struggle without hesitation or delay, to mobilize and lead all those we influence."

SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes reiterated in a November 1979 report, also printed here, that the party counted itself among those in the international working-class movement "who embraced the revolution, saw its worker and peasant character, recognized the revolutionary qualities of its leadership, sought to learn from it, and reflected this approach in our press and political activity."

The *Militant* newsweekly and the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* opened a Managua reporting bureau just weeks after the July 1979 triumph. Over the next ten years articles, interviews, and documents written or prepared by fellow workers from inside the revolution — were featured regularly in these two socialist publications, helping readers follow, understand, learn from, and, most important, act in response to developments in Nicaragua.

New International, this magazine of Marxist politics and theory, was relaunched in large part in response to these post-1979 revolutionary advances in the Americas. Our inaugural issue in 1983 explained that the magazine "will give particular attention to the revolutionary struggles in Central America and the Caribbean today. These struggles have already led in Nicaragua and Grenada to the extension of the American socialist revolution opened in Cuba a quarter century ago, as well as to an escalating war by Washington and counterrevolutionary forces in the region to crush the insurgent workers and peasants and roll back their conquests."

Pathfinder Press — which publishes works of revolutionary and communist leaders, and distributes *New International* and its French-, Spanish-, and Swedish-language sister magazines, *Nouvelle Internationale*, *Nueva Internacional*, and *Ny International* — has produced and kept in print two collections of speeches and writings by Sandinista leaders from the early years of the revolution: *Sandinistas Speak* and *Nicaragua: The Sandinista People's Revolution*. This year, in conjunction with the publication of this issue of *New International*, Pathfinder will also publish *Carlos Fonseca Speaks: Building Nicaragua's Sandinista National Liberation Front, 1960-1976* — a collection of writings and speeches by the communist leader and founder of the FSLN who was killed in combat three years prior to the triumph of the revolution.

Young people, trade unionists, working farmers, and others from the United States and other countries rallied

Continued on ISR 2

1. Castro's speeches of July 19, 1980, and July 26, 1980, can be found in *Fidel Castro Speeches: Cuba's Internationalist Foreign Policy 1975-80* (New York: Pathfinder, 1981) pp. 310-15 and 316-338.

2. In Elizabeth Stone, ed., *Women and the Cuban Revolution* (New York: Pathfinder, 1981), p. 129.

Continued from ISR 1

to defend the Nicaraguan revolution against the U.S.-organized counterrevolution. Tens of thousands followed the "Managua trail," visiting Nicaragua on their own or as part of work brigades or trips organized to help them participate in the revolution and learn from it. During the opening years of the revolution in particular, such experiences led the most determined and farsighted of these individuals to join the communist movement.

Revolutionary-minded workers and youth the world over sought to draw lessons from the political and social transformations under way in Nicaragua and Grenada and from the new boost they gave to the Cuban revolution. At an international socialist conference in Ohio hosted by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance in August 1980, SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters, currently the editor of *New Internationalist*, gave a talk entitled "Proletarian Leadership in Power: What We Can Learn from Lenin, Castro, and the FSLN," which was subsequently published by Pathfinder. "We go to the Nicaraguan revolution, to the Cuban revolution, to the Grenadian revolution to learn — not to teach," Waters said, "to absorb everything we can to better prepare ourselves for the struggles that are coming."

"This is not because we think we have nothing to offer. But every revolution," she said, "is a complex living organism with its own concrete set of class relationships. . . . To apply the science of Marxism, we can't just read a book, or study the last revolution, and mechanically transfer its tactics. We have to understand the revolution as an organic, living whole."³

Spanning the decade of the revolution's rise and decline, the reports and resolutions published in this issue were discussed and adopted by the leadership of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party and communist leagues in Australia, Britain, Canada, France, Iceland, New Zealand, and Sweden. At the heart of the documents published here is the impact of the Nicaraguan revolution in opening new possibilities for the reinforcement of international communist leadership, and for the building of revolutionary workers parties and socialist youth organizations in the United States and around the world.

Defeats in 1980s

Less than a decade after workers and farmers governments came to power in Nicaragua and in Grenada, both had been defeated. By the close of the 1980s Cuba once again stood alone as the only workers and farmers government in the world.

Among many who had once rallied to support these revolutions, it is still considered in bad taste to assess the political causes of these defeats, or frequently even to acknowledge the fact that defeats have occurred.

In the case of Grenada, the strangling of the revolution is largely written off by former partisans as the product of the U.S.-organized invasion and occupation of the island in late October 1983. What is left unsaid — or conve-



MILITANT/MICHAEL BAUMANN

Peasants utilized new power to fight for their interests. Above, landless peasants receive title to land in 1982. Through alliance with working class, small farmers fought to extend the land reform.

niently erased from memory — is that the workers and farmers government headed by Maurice Bishop had already been destroyed in a murderous, Stalinist-led counterrevolutionary coup two weeks prior to the U.S. onslaught. For the more than four years that the popular revolutionary government existed, Washington had been compelled to limit its actions against this anticapitalist revolution to a barrage of lies and hostile propaganda, economic and political pressure, brutal but isolated terrorist operations, and military threats and provocations. The U.S. rulers knew that Grenadian working people were ready to defend their conquests arms in hand against imperialist aggression.

By the time the U.S. marines and army rangers landed at Grenada's Point Salines on October 25, however, the

Victorious anticapitalist revolutions in Grenada and Nicaragua gave great new impetus to socialist revolution in Cuba

island no longer had "a government worth defending, one supported by the people," Fidel Castro pointed out in a 1985 interview. The door had been opened to the defeat and demoralization that the U.S. invasion and occupation represented. The accomplishments of the workers and farmers government in Grenada and the truth about its overthrow are discussed in detail in the article "The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop" by Steve Clark in *New Internationalist*, no. 6.⁴

With regard to Nicaragua, leaders of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), as well as many of those in the United States and around the world who apologize for their current political perspectives, deny that the foundations of the revolutionary government had totally eroded before the February 1990 electoral defeat of the FSLN. Much less do they trace that erosion to the political degeneration of the FSLN itself — from the uncompromising revolutionary organization that set out on an anti-imperialist and anticapitalist course in 1961 and eventually led the workers and peasants in the victorious 1979 insurrection, to the radical bourgeois electoral party the FSLN had been transformed into by the close of the 1980s. Ignored completely are the Stalinist, social democratic, and other petty-bourgeois pressures that had an increasing impact on the Sandinista leadership.

Instead, the blow to the Nicaraguan revolution is largely reduced by the FSLN leadership and its backers to an electoral defeat orchestrated by Washington. Meanwhile, the Sandinista revolution — today presented as having established a classless "democracy," shorn of any anticapitalist dynamic or popular revolutionary character — is somehow in suspended animation awaiting the 1996 presidential elections, when it is hoped the FSLN will sweep back into office.

A few months after the 1990 election, Victor Tirado, a member of the FSLN National Directorate, sought to rationalize this defeat and generalize this rationalization to all of Latin America and the rest of the semicolonial world.

4. For the Castro interview with Mervyn M. Dymally and Jeffrey M. Elliot, see *Fidel Castro: Nothing Can Stop the Course of History*, (New York: Pathfinder, 1986), p. 158. See also *Maurice Bishop Speaks: The Grenada Revolution and Its Overthrow, 1979-1983* (New York: Pathfinder, 1983).

"The cycle of anti-imperialist revolutions conceived of in the 1950s is finished," Tirado said. "[T]he best we can aspire to is coexistence with imperialism, even though it hurts to say so. To have good relations with them and that they let us develop." (Tirado uses "we" and "us" as pronouns for a Nicaragua with no class distinctions.)

Noam Chomsky, a professor at MIT and prominent opponent of U.S. military intervention in the Third World, has presented a more systematic version of this view on the university lecture circuit and in a spate of books and pamphlets. To Chomsky — an anarchist, or as he sometimes calls it, a proponent of "libertarian socialism" — the outcome in Nicaragua confirms a conclusion he had already drawn from the Vietnam War: that successful popular revolutions are impossible until the United States government has been qualitatively weakened at home. "Contrary to what virtually everyone — left or right — says, the United States achieved its major objectives in Indochina," Chomsky insists in a 1992 booklet entitled *What Uncle Sam Really Wants*. "Vietnam was demolished. There's no danger that successful development there will provide a model for other nations in the region. . . . Vietnam is a basket case. . . . The Third World must learn that no one dare raise their head. The global enforcer will persecute them relentlessly if they commit this unspeakable crime."

So it was in Nicaragua too, Chomsky says. "Back in 1981," Chomsky writes, "a State Department insider boasted that we would 'turn Nicaragua into the Albania of Central America' — that is, poor, isolated and politically radical — so that the Sandinista dream of creating a new, more exemplary political model for Latin America would be in ruins. . . ."

"US achievements in Central America," Chomsky says, are "a major tragedy, not just because of the appalling human cost, but because a decade ago there were prospects for progress toward meaningful democracy and meeting human needs. . . . These efforts might have worked and might have taught useful lessons to others plagued with similar problems — which, of course, was exactly what US planners feared. The threat has been successfully aborted, perhaps forever."

Forever! In short, it is futile for the toilers to organize and work toward carrying out a truly radical social revolution in today's world.

This issue of *New Internationalist* presents a sharply different view, a working-class view, of the Nicaraguan revolution's historic accomplishments and of the lessons that can be drawn by working people not only from its rise and development but also from its degeneration and decline. The defeats that occurred were not inevitable. At the cost of tens of thousands of lives and devastating economic dislocation, Nicaragua's toilers had courageously defended their revolution against the U.S. imperialist-organized counterrevolution. By the end of 1987, steered by their victory over the "contras," hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguan workers and toiling farmers — including the best of the youth of the nation — were hungry for the leadership necessary to deepen the struggle to consolidate a workers state, a state that would act consistently to advance the class interests of working people against the capitalist landlords and factory owners. The defeat of that anticapitalist perspective, and of the revolutionary government that could have made it a reality, was the product of the course taken by the FSLN leadership in face of the class pressures and internal divisions that came to a head in the closing years of the 1980s.

July 1979: an anticapitalist revolution

The July 1979 revolution in Nicaragua was born out of a popular insurrection in the cities and uprisings in the countryside organized to bring down Anastasio

3. Mary-Alice Waters, *Proletarian Leadership in Power: What We Can Learn from Lenin, Castro, and the FSLN* (New York: Pathfinder, 1980), p. 15.

In 1984 Waters authored a feature article for the third issue of *New Internationalist*, which concluded with a section on Nicaragua placing that revolution in the historic framework of the fight by the working class for political power since the beginning of the scientific communist movement in the middle of the last century. That article, "Communism and the Fight for a Popular Revolutionary Government: 1848 to Today," is one of several that have appeared in issues of *New Internationalist* drawing on the experiences of the workers and peasants of Nicaragua to enrich the theoretical tools and programmatic heritage of the international working-class movement. Among other such articles are "Their Trotsky and Ours: Communist Continuity Today" by Jack Barnes in *New Internationalist*, no. 1 (fall 1983); "'A Nose for Power': Preparing the Nicaraguan Revolution" by Tomás Borge, translated for *New Internationalist*, no. 3 (spring-summer 1983); and "The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States" by Jack Barnes in *New Internationalist*, no. 4 (spring 1985).

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WOMEN AND THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION

by Tomás Borge

In the early years of the Nicaraguan revolution, a central leader describes the challenge before the FSLN in beginning to lead, organize, and educate around the fight for women's equality. Booklet. \$2.50

Somoza, the last representative of a despotic landlord-capitalist dynasty installed by the U.S. marines in the 1930s. A nucleus of Nicaraguan youth inspired by and determined to emulate the Cuban revolution had formed the FSLN in the early 1960s and initiated guerrilla actions against Somoza's National Guard. By the time of the final battles in 1979, tens of thousands of toilers had participated — far more than the organized combatants of the FSLN.

The new government brought to power by the July 1979 insurrection encouraged the formation of unions, peasant organizations, women's groups, and youth groups. It nationalized the domestic banks and insurance companies, established controls on export trade, and expropriated several factories. It replaced the Somozaist National Guard with the Sandinista People's Army and Sandinista Police, and began forming popular militias in rural communities and urban neighborhoods and workplaces.

Through an accumulation of measures during its opening weeks and months that encroached on capitalist property and prerogatives, the new FSLN-led power rapidly emerged as a workers and farmers government. The stages and key turning points in the unfolding of this anticapitalist revolution, propelled by the FSLN leadership in response to large-scale mobilizations and expanding organization of the toilers, are concretely detailed in the documents in this issue.

Poor peasants and farm laborers, armed with a government that allied their interests to those of the urban workers, began to press their way into political life through fighting to advance land reform, the rights of rural workers, and electrification; through mass participation in a literacy drive; and through the building of their own organizations of struggle. In the cities, unorganized workers rapidly established trade unions. They set up neighborhood defense committees to defend the revolution and enforce the measures of the new government. They demanded that the government take over factories where the owner, even if not an open Somozaist, was slashing capital spending and production or carrying out other forms of economic sabotage; a number of such firms were nationalized.

Women organized to advance their fight for equality in both the countryside and cities. On the Atlantic Coast, home to most Nicaraguans who are Indian or Black, hundreds of tiny fishing and farming settlements came alive following Somoza's overturn. *Costeños* opened a struggle against racial discrimination and for the political, economic, and cultural autonomy of the region, long a victim of isolation, plunder by U.S. and Canadian companies, benign neglect by Managua, and consequent extreme underdevelopment.

The revolutionary government took steps to make education and health care available to all. It organized efforts to deal with the housing crisis faced by the overwhelming majority of working people in Nicaragua, including initial steps limiting rents, supplying sanitation and water facilities, and launching programs to construct new, low-cost homes, especially in the countryside.

But the FSLN leadership did not respond in a revolutionary way to all of the popular demands and aspirations unshackled by the overthrow of the hated Somoza tyranny. As described in the documents that follow, the new government's land policy during the opening years of the revolution, in response to mobilizations and land occupations by poor peasants and counterpressures from "patriotic" large landowners, sometimes advanced and then, more and more, hesitated and stalled.

The Sandinista leadership was at first also blind — and on the part of some leaders outright opposed — to the aspirations of Indians and Blacks on the Atlantic Coast for an end to racial and national inequality, including the region's long-standing political subservience and economic subordination to the Pacific Coast. The counterrevolution made hay of the Sandinistas' initial default. Organizations based among Indians and other Atlantic Coast residents took up arms against the revolutionary government, forming alliances with the contra bands. The FSLN government finally acceded to demands for an autonomy process in the region in the mid-1980s, qualitatively strengthening the unity of the revolution.

As the war against the U.S.-organized contra army intensified, the Sandinista government abandoned its course of relying on a politically motivated volunteer army to defeat the counterrevolution. The military conscription introduced in 1983 — to whose support the large majority of workers and peasants had not been totally won —

became another political issue on which the contra forces played with some success.

Cuba's internationalist aid

From the origins of the FSLN-led struggle in the 1960s, revolutionary Cuba provided irreplaceable internationalist aid. Following the 1979 victory, this assistance was extended to meet any help requested of the Cuban people by the Nicaraguan government.

A thousand Cuban teachers participated in the 1980 literacy crusade, bringing experience from their own 1961 campaign and Cuba's ongoing efforts to raise the educational and cultural level of working people. By 1982 some two thousand Cuban teachers had crossed the Caribbean to Central America, most of them serving in the most poverty-stricken and militarily dangerous locations in the countryside to train Nicaraguan teachers who gradually replaced them over the

reversing the toilers' gains. So far the direction in Nicaragua has been unambiguous.

"Making this characterization involves a recognition that further decisive challenges for the FSLN are down the road," Barnes said. "The process in Nicaragua will either go forward to the establishment of a workers state or backward to the overthrow of the workers and farmers government and the consolidation of a bourgeois government and the capitalist state. This government will support and lead the masses to establish a workers state or it will be eroded, weakened, and overthrown."

The Sandinista leadership's initial course was in continuity with nearly two decades of revolutionary political work by the FSLN, codified in the Historic Program of the FSLN, drafted by Carlos Fonseca and first published in 1969.

Prior to the 1959 triumph in Cuba, Fonseca and other young fighters had joined the Moscow-oriented Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN) hoping to find an organization through which to advance the fight for national liberation and socialism. But these Nicaraguan revolutionists were deeply affected by the political accomplishments of the Cuban leadership, which had to bypass the pro-Moscow Popular Socialist Party in order to carry out a course of action capable of bringing down the Batista dictatorship. Drawing the lessons of the Cuban revolution, Fonseca became convinced of the need to break with the Stalinists and their self-serving dogma that a worker and peasant revolution with an anticapitalist thrust was not on the historical agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The PSN leadership, Fonseca wrote in 1969, "could not distinguish between the justice of the anti-Somozaist opposition and the maneuvers" of its bourgeois leadership, who "carried out all kinds of compromises with the Somoza regime." Following the founding of the FSLN in 1961, Fonseca said, some of those attracted to the new organization retained illusions in the Socialist Party for several years, while others recoiled from Marxism due to its association in their minds with the PSN's sectarian factionalism and class collaborationism. But "it was only a question of time before the youth and people of Nicaragua would begin to distinguish between the false Marxists and the true Marxists," he wrote.⁵

FSLN's Historic Program

The FSLN's Historic Program, reprinted in these pages, pledged to destroy the Somoza dictatorship's "military and bureaucratic apparatus" and "establish a revolutionary government based on an alliance of the workers and peasants and a convergence of all patriotic forces opposed to imperialism and the oligarchy." The new government, said the program, would establish broad democratic rights and initiate social, political, and economic measures to "create a Nicaragua that is free of exploitation, oppression, and backwardness." The program called for "an immediate and massive distribution of land, taking what was stolen by the big landlords and giving it back to the toilers (small producers) who labor on it." It pledged "a massive campaign to immediately wipe out illiteracy" and measures to uproot the "odious discrimination" suffered by women, as well as by Blacks and

Continued on ISR 4

5. Carlos Fonseca, "Nicaragua: Zero Hour" in Tomás Borge, Carlos Fonseca, Daniel Ortega, et al., *Sandinistas Speak* (New York: Pathfinder, 1982); also to appear in a new translation in *Carlos Fonseca Speaks* (New York: Pathfinder, 1994).



Working class made big gains, especially in early years of revolution. Pictured above are workers of El Triunfo garment plant in November 1987. Banner reads, "The workers of El Triunfo are not giving back our factory. Never!"

next couple of years. Cuba built a 150-bed hospital in Managua; provided nearly a thousand doctors, nurses, and other medical personnel to work throughout the country; and organized training of Nicaraguan medical personnel in public health and preventive medicine.

Some five hundred Cuban construction workers helped build a modern sugar mill for the Nicaraguan government to process one of the country's main export products; not only the labor but all the machinery, building materials, and other inputs were donated by the Cuban government. Cuban workers, engineers, and technicians helped with the construction of other factories, roads, bridges, and agricultural and fishing installations as well. During the latter 1980s, Cuba annually sent four shipments of food, clothing, and other basic items to Nicaragua's economically backward north Atlantic Coast; this solidarity was of such a scope as to be sufficient to meet the needs of fifty thousand people, a third of the region's population. When a hurricane devastated the Atlantic Coast town of Bluefields in 1989, the Cuban government sent 300 volunteers to help build 1,000 new houses to replace some of the 6,000 destroyed in the storm.

In line with its proletarian internationalist policies, the Cuban government also offered every kind of military assistance to its compañeros in Nicaragua, who faced the challenge of arming and training a revolutionary workers and peasants army and militias in the very process of defending the new government against counterrevolutionary terror and U.S.-organized sabotage. The Cuban government provided badly needed light and heavy weaponry, as well as military trainers and advisers. The Sandinistas, Fidel Castro told a Spanish reporter in 1985, "had to build a new army, training hundreds of thousands of citizens in defense, so they needed teachers, instructors, and advisers, and we have provided them."

Workers and farmers government

Recognizing the anticapitalist dynamic of a workers and farmers government such as the one that emerged from the 1979 revolution in Nicaragua is "not to express certainty that it is foreordained under all circumstances to expropriate the bourgeoisie and become a workers state," SWP leader Jack Barnes explained in his 1979 report. "It's to recognize a tendency and a fact, in order better to learn from it and throw our weight in the scales to help the revolutionary leadership move it forward."

"Such a situation is inherently unstable," the SWP leader pointed out. "Class confrontations will arise that will be decisive in determining which way the process will develop. As each one arises, the government throws its weight to resolving it in a proletarian direction — toward socialism — or in a bourgeois direction toward





From left to right, Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega, Grenadian prime minister Maurice Bishop, and Cuban president Fidel Castro at 1980 May Day celebration in Havana. "Grenada, Nicaragua, and Cuba are three giants rising up to defend their right to independence, sovereignty, and justice, on the very threshold of imperialism," said Castro at a conference in Cuba two months earlier.

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Indians living on the Atlantic Coast and elsewhere.

On international perspectives, the program declared that a workers and peasants government would "put an end to the foreign policy of subservience to U.S. imperialism" and "actively support the struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America against both traditional and modern forms of colonialism, and against the common enemy: U.S. imperialism." It extended support to "the struggle of the Black people and all the people of the United States for genuine democracy and equal rights."

The FSLN's Historic Program pledged to "expropriate the landed estates, factories, companies, buildings, means of transportation, and other enterprises fraudulently acquired by the Somoza family [and] their accomplices"; to "nationalize the holdings of all foreign companies that exploit mineral, forest, maritime, and other natural resources"; to "establish workers control over the management of factories"; and to "plan the national economy, putting an end to the anarchy characteristic of the capitalist system of production."

Washington organizes counterrevolution

The revolutionary government's steps to organize workers and farmers to carry out this program were electrifying to workers, peasants, and youth throughout the region and even worldwide. The U.S. imperialist rulers, having stood behind Somoza to the last ditch, sought to pressure the new government, economically and politically, to back off its course. Failing in this effort too, Washington by late 1981 had begun training and financing a counterrevolutionary army headed by former members of Somoza's officer corps.

Over the next six years, the U.S.-organized contras mounted armed assaults and waged a murderous war to destroy the revolution. Washington orchestrated this mercenary force from the U.S. Southern Command in the Panama Canal Zone and from a string of rapidly established U.S. military bases in Honduras, just north of Nicaragua. The CIA and Pentagon organized covert operations such as the mining of Nicaragua's harbors (damaging at least seven foreign ships), the bombing and shelling of fuel depots and oil pipelines, and the destruction of crops and agricultural machinery and installations.

These terrorist actions were carried out not just by U.S.-organized ex-National Guardsmen and other Nicaraguans,

but also by U.S. personnel and counterrevolutionary Cubans on the CIA payroll. Supply flights of food and ammunition for contra bands operating inside Nicaragua, for example, were flown out of El Salvador's Ilopango airport under the direction of Luis Posada, who is widely known to have organized (along with Orlando Bosch) the 1976 bombing of a Cubana Airlines commercial flight after its takeoff from Barbados, killing all seventy-three passengers aboard. The Nicaraguan army's downing and capture of U.S. pilot Eugene Hasenfus in October 1986 lifted part of the veil off Washington's direct involvement in the contra war and forced them to shift their logistics operation from Ilopango.

Coming showdown in Caribbean

Washington's launching of the contra war was accompanied by intensified preparations for military aggression against Grenada and Cuba, as well as increased military aid to the beleaguered Salvadoran dictatorship. To this end,

Every deep-going struggle by working people will confront the implacable hatred of U.S. rulers

U.S. military bases were refurbished and expanded — from the U.S. armed forces Caribbean Task Force in Key West, Florida (established by the Carter administration in reaction to the Nicaragua and Grenada revolutions), to installations in Puerto Rico, the Panama Canal Zone, and elsewhere in the region. The U.S.-organized contras in Honduras also collaborated with the rightist regime in that country to assassinate its opponents in the unions and on campuses.

"The imperialists have no alternative but to fight to reverse this altered relationship of class forces brought about by the revolutionary advances in the region," warned the Socialist Workers Party in a resolution adopted in 1985 that is printed in this issue of *New Internationalist*. "With the support of both political parties of U.S. imperialism, the Pentagon is steadily deepening its military intervention in El Salvador. . . . The U.S. government is fielding a Somocista mercenary army to weaken and if possible overthrow the workers and peasants government in Nicaragua. . . . Washington is trying to convert Honduras into a virtual U.S. military base. It is pushing to transform the entire region, including the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico, into a military staging ground for its counterrevolutionary war."

The intensified U.S. military pressures in the wake of the Nicaraguan and Grenada revolutions led to renewed threats and provocations against Cuba, including a practice invasion of the island staged by the marines on the beaches of the U.S.-occupied Guantánamo naval base on the eastern end of the island.

"Washington's stubborn refusal to allow the peoples of the Caribbean and Central America to run their own governments, control their own resources, and chart their own destinies carries a grave threat of war" in the entire region, said the Socialist Workers Party's National Committee in a May 1980 statement entitled "The Coming Showdown in the Caribbean," printed in this issue of *New Internationalist*. Confronted with this mounting imperialist threat, the Cuban government responded by mobilizing the workers and farmers to defend their

revolutionary conquests and national sovereignty. In April and May 1980 there were three enormous popular mobilizations in Cuba, including a March of the Fighting People in Havana and other cities of some five million people, half the island's population.

"Carter cannot get five million Americans — or even a fraction of that number — to demonstrate for his policy toward Latin America," said the 1980 SWP National Committee statement. "And it's no wonder. Why should U.S. workers fight our brothers and sisters in Latin America? . . . The plunder of imperialist exploitation serves only to strengthen the same giant U.S. corporations that attack our wages, jobs, and union rights here at home."

In January 1981 the Cuban government launched the Territorial Troop Militia; over the next few years, some 1.5 million workers, farmers, students, and other volunteers were armed and trained in military skills. Weapons and uniforms for the militia have been paid for through voluntary contributions by the Cuban people.

To supplement these measures of revolutionary self-defense, Cuba's communist leadership also sought a commitment of military assistance from the government of the Soviet Union. But they learned once again — as they had during the so-called missile crisis in October 1962 — that the privileged bureaucratic caste in Moscow was anything but a steadfast internationalist ally.⁶ In a 1993 interview Cuba's minister of the armed forces, Raúl Castro, described an official visit to Moscow in the early 1980s "to communicate to the Soviet leadership our own government's opinion on the urgent need to take extraordinary political and diplomatic actions in order to check renewed U.S. intentions to attack Cuba militarily." The Cuban delegation met with a top-ranking official of the Soviet government and Communist Party.

"The Soviet leader's reply was categorical," Raúl Castro said. "In the event of U.S. aggression toward Cuba, 'We cannot fight in Cuba because you are 11,000 kilometers away from us. Do you think we're going to go all that way to stick our necks out for you?' Those were his very words. . . ."

"Although for many years we had been working on the assumption that the USSR would not go to war over Cuba and we would have to rely solely on our own forces," Raúl Castro said, "it was at that moment of greatest danger that the Soviet leadership clearly and officially informed us . . . that in the event of military aggression by the Pentagon, Cuba would find herself dramatically alone."

The central leadership of the revolution "suffered silently the bitter burden," he said. "We learned from the experience and drew greater strength to prepare ourselves for taking on our historic mission alone."

"Since the USSR has disappeared and its most confidential files are no longer confidential," he told the interviewer, "there's no longer any reason to keep it a secret."⁷

Setbacks and defeats in 1980s

By the mid-1980s revolutionary struggles in the Central American and Caribbean region had suffered a number of setbacks and defeats.

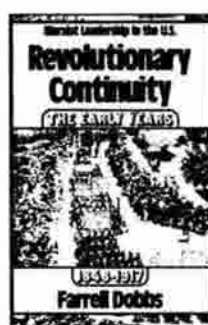
In Guatemala the U.S.-backed regime had dealt severe blows to guerrillas leading a struggle against the dictatorship there.

6. In face of preparations by the Democratic Party administration of President John F. Kennedy to invade Cuba to drown in blood the socialist revolution there, the Cuban government in 1962 signed a mutual defense agreement with the Soviet government that included the deployment of Soviet nuclear-tipped missiles in Cuba. In October of that year, Washington announced publicly that its intelligence flights over Cuba had detected the missiles and that it had imposed a naval blockade ringing the island. Within a few days, in face of this confrontation between nuclear-armed powers, Moscow came to agreement with Washington on withdrawal of the missiles; Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev did not consult beforehand with the Cuban government on this decision or the terms of the withdrawal, nor even inform Havana of the agreement prior to its public announcement.

In an October 1992 interview with NBC television interviewer Maria Shriver on the thirtieth anniversary of these events, Castro said that if Cuban revolutionaries had known in 1962 what they knew now about the political orientation of the Soviet leadership, they would not have accepted the deployment of the missiles on Cuban soil. He explained his view that Cuba had paid an unacceptable political price for agreeing to the missiles under the conditions demanded by Moscow. He said that the Cuban government had strongly opposed Moscow's insistence that the military agreement between Cuba and the Soviet Union be kept secret. Cuban leaders had argued that the pact should be made public, presenting the U.S. government's invasion plans as the reason for the missile deployment. Cuban revolutionaries accepted the missiles only when it became clear to them that Moscow would never agree to this public pact. They did so, Castro said, in the mistaken belief that this was in the best interests of defending the world struggle for socialism.

But in accepting deployment under these conditions of secrecy, Castro told the interviewer, the Cuban revolution lost some of the moral and political high ground it had achieved among workers and farmers in the Americas and elsewhere in the world. Cuba had an unqualified sovereign right to enter into a mutual defense agreement against foreign aggression with any government it chose, he said. But the secrecy undercut the clarity of its political goals in the eyes of hundreds of millions the world over. Moreover, he said, the whole course pressed on Cuba by the Soviet government turned out, under these conditions, to be sheer adventurism that led the world to the brink of nuclear war. See Fidel Castro, *Missiles en el Caribe* (Havana: Editora Política), available from Pathfinder.

7. The interview was conducted by the Mexican daily *El Sol de México* and reprinted in the Cuban press, including the May 5, 1993, issue of *Granma Internacional*.



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In El Salvador a 1981 "final offensive" by the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) had failed. Unions and other political organizations were driven underground, with opponents of the regime tortured and dumped in alleys on a daily basis by death squads run by the officer corps. In the countryside, U.S.-trained battalions engaged in massacres of peasants, hoping to wipe out support for the FMLN. The ferocious repression failed to end popular resistance, but the civil war entered a stalemate, with neither side able to defeat the other. In addition, in 1983 a Stalinist faction led by Salvador Cayetano Carpio, founder of one of the FMLN's component organizations, organized the assassination in Nicaragua of Mélida Anaya Montes (Commander Ana María), who had broken with Carpio's efforts to block unification of these groups. When the truth about this crime was uncovered by the Sandinista police, Carpio committed suicide and his supporters split from the FMLN, forming their own, Stalinist grouping.

The most serious setback was the 1983 murder of Grenadian prime minister Maurice Bishop by a Stalinist faction in the leadership of the ruling New Jewel Movement, overthrowing the workers and farmers government, and the subsequent U.S. invasion of that island. With Bishop's assassination and the subsequent U.S. invasion and occupation, one of the "three giants" was defeated, and the loss was felt deep-

Cadre forged in revolutionary war could have been redeployed to help lead class struggle forward

ly in Cuba, in Nicaragua, throughout the Caribbean, and among revolutionists in the United States and elsewhere who had been inspired by the Grenada revolution.

'Iran-contra' and imperial presidency

Despite bipartisan determination in Washington to reverse the revolution in Nicaragua, by 1984 tactical divisions had opened among the U.S. rulers over the political price they were beginning to pay at home and in Latin America for publicly financing and directly involving themselves with mercenary bands carrying out terrorist activities against a popular government. Antiwar protests were growing in the United States, and unlike during the early anti-Vietnam War movement, as the 1985 SWP resolution notes, sections of the union movement were "involved from the beginning in opposing Washington's war moves."

In 1984 Congress adopted the so-called Boland Amendment cutting off military aid to the mercenaries. The bipartisan war party in Washington responded by setting up a covert operation run by Lt. Col. Oliver North from the White House basement in close coordination with then-CIA director William Casey. Over the next couple of years, they poured millions of dollars into the contras' coffers. Funds were raised from a variety of sources — from contributions by individual U.S. capitalists such as the notorious union-buster Joseph Coors, to large contributions by the royal family in Saudi Arabia, to clandestine arms sales to Iran. The exposure in November 1986 of the so-called "Iran-contra," or "Contragate," operation put a spotlight on the reality that such covert military operations had become one of the necessary and institutionalized bipartisan methods of carrying out U.S. foreign policy.

In January 1994, just weeks before this issue of *New Internationalist* came off the press, the Reagan-appointed special prosecutor, Lawrence Walsh, publicly issued his final report on Contragate. While the investigation had begun with the bang of a government crisis in late 1986, it ended with a

whimper seven years later. Of the fourteen Reagan administration figures Walsh had brought charges against for their involvement in the Iran-contra operation or its cover-up, he had won eleven guilty pleas or convictions. But the convictions of Oliver North and White House national security adviser John Poindexter were subsequently overturned by a higher court. And during his last weeks in office, President George Bush — himself unambiguously implicated in Walsh's final report for participating in the cover-up while Reagan's vice-president — gave a Christmas Eve pardon to former defense secretary Caspar Weinberger and five others. In Weinberger's case, this was the first time in U.S. history that a president had pardoned someone under indictment before a trial had even begun.

Walsh's report finds that "senior Reagan administration officials engaged in a concerted effort to deceive Congress and the public about their knowledge of and support for" North's operation and that Reagan "participated or at least acquiesced" in the cover-up. The report also says that the White House made North and two former national security advisers, Poindexter and Robert McFarlane, into "scapegoats whose sacrifice would protect the Reagan administration in its final two years."

This is all true enough. But the stakes in the Iran-contra scandal have nothing to do with the pecking order of guilt and accountability in the executive branch, nor even with a supposed conflict between the White House and Congress, as insisted upon by liberals, social democrats, and Stalinists alike.

In fact, both Democratic and Republican members of Congress had openly backed funding for the contras from 1981 to 1984. Afterwards, during the congressional "ban" on U.S. funding, prominent members from both parties winked at ongoing aid to the contras, whose scale of operations could have been sustained in no other way. In his 1991 book *Under Fire: An American Story*, Oliver North — who says "President Reagan knew everything" — also explains that after Congress cut off funds to the contras, he still gave "numerous briefings about the resistance" to members of the Democrat-dominated House Intelligence Committee "and to dozens of their congressional colleagues."

"Many of them had been to the region," North wrote, "visited the camps, met with resistance leaders, and seen the close quarters at Ilopango Air Force Base, where the resistance planes were stationed. For years they had been asking CIA briefers about the sources of contra support and they had all seemingly accepted the Agency's claims of ignorance."

As the *New Yorker* magazine lamented in commenting on North's book when it appeared in late 1991, the lieutenant colonel's activities, "although they violated the Boland Amendment, were an open secret in Washington. (As is often the case, making a policy covert served as a way of removing it from public debate.)"

That, of course, is the purpose of the covert character of these operations.

What's more, just months before Contragate became public and Eugene Hasenfus's plane was shot down over Nicaragua, the bipartisan Congress had voted to resume open military and so-called humanitarian aid to the contras, ultimately providing them with some \$200 million extending right up to the eve of the February 1990 Nicaraguan elections.

No wonder Theodore Draper — a prominent liberal historian who has been the main chronicler of the multitudinous accounts of the Iran-contra affair — pens the following epitaph on the Walsh investigation: "Can something on the order of the Iran-contra affairs happen again in the United States? I am not sanguine that we have been inoculated against some sort of repetition." As Draper concludes, the "Iran-contra events may be more important as a warning of what can go wrong in the American system than as a bar to its going wrong again."⁸

The pervasive secrecy of government and the strengthening of the executive branch reflect the reality of the evolution of the U.S. imperialist state and bipartisan foreign policy in the closing decades of this century. The Walsh report is the chronicle of "covert" actions foretold, not forestalled.

Among members of Congress and the ruling capitalist families they represent, co-



Volunteer worker harvests squash in Holguín, Cuba. Revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada gave impetus to Cuban communists to launch rectification process in mid-1980s.

vert military operations have become such an institutionalized and necessary mode of functioning that the rulers muddled through the government crisis sparked by the Iran-contra revelations with only minor scrapes and bruises. Two decades earlier, Watergate had banged them up much more badly. That scandal had been a product of deep divisions within the ruling class over the appropriate response to big changes in U.S. politics registered by mass opposition in the streets to the Vietnam War and the still-reverberating effects of mass struggles for Black rights over the prior fifteen years. In addition, the White House-instigated burglary of the Democratic Party's election campaign offices, which triggered the scandal, was such a flagrant factional abuse within the ruling class and their institutions that, given the temper of the times, the resulting fissure widened beyond their initial intent.

For the working class and its allies, the Iran-contra affair underlines the growing threat to democratic rights in the United States, as the capitalist rulers in both parties increasingly find it necessary to cloak in secrecy the actions they must take to protect their class interests in face of the growing new world disorder.⁹

More recently, for example, the U.S. rulers resorted to sweeping lies and half-truths to justify their war preparations against Iraq in late 1990; they then fabricated "news" on an hourly basis in early 1991 throughout their six-week bombardment and one-hundred-hour invasion of Iraq in order to cover up the massive scale and heinous character of the slaughter. Two years later, with the complicity of the big-business-owned press, Washington is still suppressing the truth about the U.S. army's "turkey shoot" against retreating Iraqi troops and fleeing civilians on the road from Kuwait to Basra; the burying alive in the desert sands of Iraqi soldiers who were unequipped to fight and were trying to surrender; and other horrors that have been covered up altogether. (Washington also wishes the Israeli Defense Ministry would shut up about the fact that the Pentagon's headline-hyped Patriot anti-aircraft missiles, far from deflecting and destroying incoming Iraqi Scud missiles, actually increased damage and casualties on the ground.)¹⁰

Defeat of the contras

The U.S. government crisis in the wake of the Iran-contra revelations did, however, weaken the imperialist-organized efforts to crush the Nicaraguan revolution.

The workers, peasants, and youth in the Sandinista army

Continued on ISR 6



May 1980 March of the Fighting People in Havana. Some 5 million Cubans joined these actions to counter imperialist war threats.

8. *New York Review of Books*, March 3, 1994.

9. See "Washington's Fifty-Year Domestic Contra Operation" by Larry Seigle in *New Internationalist*, no. 6 (1987).

10. For a more detailed description of the U.S. slaughter in Iraq and its political lessons, see "The Opening Guns of World War III" by Jack Barnes in *New Internationalist*, no. 7 (1991).



MILITANT/ROBERTO KOPEC

Sandinista troops on patrol in northern Nicaragua in 1987. By the second half of that year, the revolution had broken the momentum of the contra army and defeated it. The U.S.-backed mercenaries never mounted more than terrorist acts in subsequent years.

Continued from ISR 5

fought courageously and gained confidence and experience in combat against the contras. Some 30,000 lives, out of a population of 3.5 million, were lost in the fighting — the proportional equivalent of more than 2 million deaths in the United States, more than five times the number of U.S. soldiers killed in action in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War combined. Tens of thousands of Nicaraguans were maimed and hundreds of thousands left homeless.

By the latter half of 1987, however, the Nicaraguan government had broken the momentum of the contra army and defeated it. Over the next few years, the contra bands never mounted an order of battle beyond terrorist acts. The place of the Cuban government in aiding this triumph by Nicaragua's workers and peasants was substantial. For concrete political and military reasons, units of Cuban volunteers were never fielded in the same way against the contra army as they were in Angola against apartheid's invading troops and CIA-funded Angolan rightists. But Cuba's practical, internationalist commitment to a victory in Nicaragua's revolutionary war was its Cuito Cuanavale in the Americas.¹¹

The victory over the contras was codified in the agreement signed by the presidents of Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Guatemala on August 7, 1987, in Guatemala City. The accords stipulated that by November 7, 1987, each of the five governments would

establish a cease-fire with "irregular" military forces fighting in their country, extend full amnesty to those who had taken up arms, and lift all restrictions on civil liberties. The Nicaraguan government moved immediately to implement the accords.

A resolution adopted by the SWP Political Committee at the time, printed in these pages, hailed the revolutionary victory over the contras, pointing to the prospects that triumph opened for Nicaraguan working people to deepen the revolution in their class interests. Further advances along the anticapitalist course the workers and farmers government had charted at its outset, the resolution said, would be facilitated by the FSLN leadership's decision following the signing of the Guatemala accords to lift emergency war measures, such as censorship and suspension of the right of habeas corpus. Some such steps had been necessary to meet the challenge of the war. But maintaining restrictions under these new conditions, the resolution pointed out, would be "an obstacle to advancing the political education, orientation, and organization of the working people in the city and countryside as the class struggle deepens in Nicaragua."

In face of the imperialist-backed assault and Washington's unrelenting propaganda campaign against the Sandinista government, most class-conscious workers in Nicaragua had supported the FSLN's efforts to maintain a united front with the dwindling number of capitalists and landowners willing to back the war against the contras. The anticapitalist measures that marked the revolution's opening years were not extended during the mid-1980s. Some important democratic advances were made, however, such as the intermittent granting of more land to peasants and farm laborers and the initiation of the autonomy process on the Atlantic Coast.

Now, with the defeat of the contras, the September 1987 resolution said, "we will see more clearly, with fewer disguises, what it means to be a workers and farmers government — not a workers state, and not a capitalist regime. The essential fact that the class struggle between the working classes and the exploiting classes is the spring, the dynamic, of change in Nicaraguan society will be more visible both inside and outside Nicaragua."

The resolution pointed out that until the contras were

defeated "the Reagan administration had been able to maintain the initiative, pushing hard on the right flank of the rightward-shifting bipartisan consensus around the need to overthrow the Nicaraguan government. That initiative has now shattered following the Iran-contra exposures and the Guatemala accords." But the U.S. rulers, it said, "cannot and will not come to an 'accommodation' with the Nicaraguan revolution as long as it remains a revolution. Nicaragua cannot 'buy peace' through measures relating to maintaining the mixed economy, restoring civil liberties, or other similar moves." This was to prove bitterly true.

The revolutionary war the

Sandinistas fought and won had forged the cadres who could now be redeployed to help lead the class struggle forward in the postwar situation. Thousands of workers, peasants, and youth had gained leadership experience and confidence in the war effort. As the army demobilized, these cadres began returning to the factories, fields, working-class neighborhoods, and rural villages.

Revolutionary war forged working-class cadres

If consciously led by the FSLN to deepen an anticapitalist political course, these cadres could have put their energies to work and rapidly gained further revolutionary class-struggle experience in efforts to extend union rights and workers control in the factories; to deepen the fight for land and the wherewithal to till it by poor and landless peasants; to organize rural wage laborers to defend their class interests; to draw more women into the labor force and advance their fight for equality, including abortion rights and other demands; and to mobilize the toilers on the Atlantic Coast to use the autonomy process — which had been decisive in winning the majority there to the fight against the contras — to improve the social and cultural conditions in the most economically backward region of the country.

Coming on top of Nicaragua's legacy of imperialist-caused underdevelopment, economic production in the 1980s had been devastated by war-caused disruption of plantings and harvests, the destruction of agricultural machinery and buildings, Washington's suspension of aid and 1985 cutoff of trade, U.S.-organized sabotage of port facilities and other infrastructure, and the death and maiming of tens of thousands of peasants and workers. By the latter half of 1987, the Sandinista government estimated that Nicaragua had suffered nearly \$700 million in direct costs of destroyed productive capacity and an overall economic toll of \$3.7 billion, including lost aid and trade. These are devastating figures for an economy and a population the size of Nicaragua's.

In the mid-1980s the Soviet government had been providing economic aid to Nicaragua, largely in the form of bilateral trading credits, freeing the FSLN government from having to exhaust its hard-to-come-by reserves of dollars and other

Defeat of Nicaraguan revolution was product of course taken by FSLN leadership

convertible currencies. While this assistance was well below Nicaragua's needs, it nonetheless met most of the country's petroleum requirements and was among its main sources of international financial assistance and trade relations. In 1987, however, as the Stalinist regime plunged into deepening crisis and ever more desperately sought acceptance into the world capitalist order, Moscow began cutting oil supplies to the Sandinista government and drastically reduced its purchase of Nicaraguan exports. The energy crisis in Nicaragua that year was met in part through Cuba's internationalist donation of extra fuel.

The growing economic pressures created obstacles to moving forward in Nicaragua. These hurdles could not be overcome, the SWP's 1987 resolution pointed out, by continuing to pursue "a kind of 'war communism' without the economic foundations of a workers state." The revolutionary government would undoubtedly have had to tack, maneuver, and sometimes retreat in face of the strength of imperialism and the remaining class enemies of the toilers inside Nicaragua.

But any necessary maneuvers and retreats had to be explained frankly and clearly to the toilers, including the reasons for these measures, their goals, and the dangers they posed for the exploited classes. The workers and peasants had to be organized to press for solutions that would protect their basic living standards to the degree possible and that would strengthen their alliance and their social position vis-à-vis the exploiters.

Over the course of 1988 and 1989, workers and peasants came into increasing conflict with the owners of the factories, giant farms, and commercial enterprises. As the class interests of the exploited and the exploiters clashed ever more sharply, however, it became clear from the FSLN leadership's decisions at each turning point that they had rejected an anticapitalist course.

As explained in the August 1989 report by Larry Seigle to the SWP National Committee that closes this issue of *New Internationalist*, "The problems the toilers face today do not stem from the fact that the FSLN government did not go faster than it did toward expropriating capitalist property in 1979 or in 1980 or in 1981. The problem is that the FSLN government is no longer traveling on the road it was traveling in 1979, 1980, and 1981. It is no longer preparing the Nicaraguan toilers to move toward a socialist revolution. It is going in the opposite direction."

The FSLN turned away from drawing the vanguard of Nicaragua's working class and rural toilers into the leadership of the Sandinista movement and organizing a revolutionary organization, a communist party, that could lead them in using the workers and farmers government to defend their class interests. Such a line of march would have inevitably resulted — at whatever pace and through

11. Shortly before Angola's independence from Portuguese colonial rule on November 11, 1975, the country's new government was attacked by invading South African troops. Apartheid's forces were allied with the rightist National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), which was funded by Washington. Cuban volunteers responded to the Angolan government's appeal for international aid in repelling the aggression. The South African troops were pushed back, but renewed incursions and armed counterrevolutionary actions by UNITA continued over the next dozen years. In early 1988 Cuban, Angolan, and Namibian forces dealt a decisive military defeat to South Africa's troops, who were driving to capture the town of Cuito Cuanavale in southeastern Angola. That stand, combined with a determined campaign by Cuban and Angolan forces to reinforce the defense of southern Angola, led to an accord signed in December 1988 in which Pretoria agreed to withdraw its troops from Angola and to begin negotiations that culminated in granting independence to Namibia in March 1990.

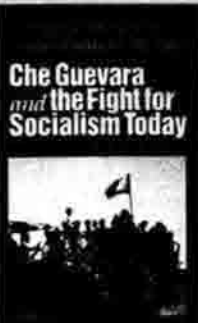
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whatever concrete stages, but also with whatever explosive and irrepressible class confrontations — in new and more far-reaching assaults on the prerogatives and property of the capitalists.

FSLN leadership rejects working-class course

The political degeneration of the FSLN leadership in face of these new challenges is described in the 1989 SWP resolution, "Defend Revolutionary Nicaragua: The Eroding Foundations of the Workers and Farmers Government," and in the two reports on that resolution by SWP leader Larry Seigle, who headed the *Militant's* Managua bureau at the time. These documents round out this issue of *New Internationalist*.

Land reform came to a virtual standstill, as the FSLN turned over leadership of the Sandinista peasants organizations to capitalist farmers and guaranteed them that no further land would be taken to meet the needs of landless tillers; in January 1989 the FSLN government declared an end to any further land expropriations. The burden of the capitalist economic crisis in the cities was placed on the backs of the working class, as wage controls and severe austerity measures were imposed. By the opening of 1990 the *New York Times* could write that the FSLN leadership had decided "to revive their battered economy with an austerity program so conventional and market-oriented that it has been compared to the methods of the International Monetary Fund."

The Sandinista union leadership largely retreated to the role of justifying government policies before the working class. The neighborhood, women's, and youth organizations, already weakened in the mid-1980s, degenerated into staff organizations, while the popular militias had already ceased functioning except in rural areas under direct contra threat. The FSLN leadership pulled back from the fight for women's equality and from the struggle against racial discrimination and national oppression on the Atlantic Coast. As a result of these policies, the worker-peasant alliance that had formed the social foundation of the revolutionary government was undermined.

The Sandinista leadership now presented the fight for national unity to defeat the contras as a political justification for class collaboration, which they implemented through the call for *concertación* — a "social pact" — with the landlords and capitalists. Reliance on capitalist market relations and deepening integration into the world capitalist system was more and more openly defended by the entire top FSLN leadership as a way out of Nicaragua's economic crisis and as the way forward for economic and social development. It became common for FSLN leaders to reject Marxism and communism as outmoded at best and to present the Nicaraguan revolution as charting some supposed "third road" between capitalism and socialism.

As this political evolution accelerated, the Nicaraguan government in December 1989 signed an accord, along with other Central American governments, demanding that the FMLN in El Salvador "immediately and effectively cease its hostilities" and take steps toward "demobilization." The accord also pledged "decisive support of Salvadoran president Alfredo Cristiani and his government."

Impact of Stalinism

In all of these cases, the Sandinista leaders turned away from reliance on the organization, mobilization, and political consciousness of the workers and peasants — the course that three decades earlier, under the impact of the Cuban revolution, had determined the break of the FSLN's founding leaders from Stalinism. It was that revolutionary orientation that had laid the political basis for the successful insurrection by the workers and peasants that brought down the Somoza tyranny and initially set the new government on a revolutionary proletarian course.

By the end of the 1980s, however, at the very time the anti-working-class regimes and apparatuses in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were beginning to crumble, the FSLN leadership returned politically to the Stalinist rationalizations that the most conscious fighters in both Nicaragua and Cuba had rejected in order to make possible a revolution. Under various names, Stalinist parties in those countries and throughout Latin America and elsewhere had insisted for decades that anticapitalist revolutions were precluded in the colonial and semicolonial world. Only the fight for "democracy" was on the agenda historically in these countries, the Stalinist manuals taught, and to accomplish this the working class and national liberation movements had to pursue a strategic course of collaboration with "progressive" layers of the domestic exploiters and subordination to the procapitalist policies of these exploiters. From the mid-1930s on, this class-collaborationist course disarmed revolutionary-minded workers, peasants, and youth in the Americas and worldwide, leading to numerous missed opportunities and bloody defeats.¹²

The socialist revolution in Cuba gave the lie to this Stalin-

ist justification for class collaboration. "Had we been willing to follow the schemas, we would not be gathered here today," Fidel Castro said in 1988 at the annual July 26 rally marking Cuban revolutionaries' assault on the Moncada garrison in 1953. "We would not have had a July 26, we would not have had a socialist revolution in this hemisphere — perhaps there would not have been any yet. Had we been willing to follow the schemas, theory had it that no revolution could be made here; that's . . . what the manuals used to say."

Nearly three decades after the victory in Cuba, Castro said, only one other "true and profound revolution" had been made in the Americas and — unlike Grenada by then — survived. That was the Nicaraguan revolution. "There have been no other ones in the rest of Latin America. . . . Rickets, malnutrition, children without schools, young people unemployed and without universities are everywhere and there's been no revolution."

Cumulative effects of defeats of workers and farmers governments in Grenada and Nicaragua dealt political blow to Cuban revolution

In Cuba, Castro said, "we drew our own conclusions starting from the principles of socialism," not from the manuals. Cuban freedom fighters said "there are objective conditions in Cuba for a revolution; what's missing are subjective conditions. . . . [S]tarting out from a true appraisal of our people, their characteristics, their history, the objective realities that afflicted them, even if they were not as bad as those that afflicted other countries on our continent," Castro said, "we arrived at the conclusion that the revolution was possible in our country. This is why our country, which was the last one — the last one! — to free itself from Spain, became the first one to free itself from U.S. imperialism in this hemisphere, the first one! And the first one to carry out a socialist revolution."¹³

Revolutionists in many countries of the Americas sought to learn the lessons from the experience of the revolution in Cuba and blaze a different trail. Maurice Bishop and his comrades had done so in Grenada, as had Carlos Fonseca and his compañeros in Nicaragua, creating the political preconditions for the victories in 1979 that opened a new stage in the advance of the socialist revolution in the Americas.

Defeat of workers and farmers government

This was the revolutionary course the FSLN leadership rejected coming out of the victory over the contras in 1987. Its political degeneration accelerated throughout 1988 and 1989, bringing about the defeat of the workers and farmers government that had come to power a decade earlier.

No other workers and farmers regime had ever existed for more than a year or so — three or four years at most — without either going forward to the expropriation of the capitalist class and establishment of a workers state (e.g.,

Russia in 1918, Yugoslavia in 1947, China by 1952, Cuba in 1960, and southern Vietnam in 1978) or backward to the reconsolidation of a bourgeois government and capitalist state. The documents that close this issue explain why the process in Nicaragua was more protracted before the question was settled.

The form taken by the defeat of the workers and farmers government in Nicaragua was also unique. In Hungary and Bavaria in 1919, short-lived workers and farmers regimes were crushed in bloody landlord-capitalist counterrevolutions. In Algeria in 1965 and Grenada in 1983, workers and farmers governments were overthrown in military coups organized by sections of the leadership of the radical petty-bourgeois organizations that had led these revolutions; but in both cases the central leading figures in those revolutionary governments — Ahmed Ben Bella in Algeria, Maurice Bishop in Grenada — were overthrown. Ben Bella was jailed, and Bishop and dozens of other Grenadian revolutionists were massacred by the Stalinist faction around Bernard Coard.¹⁴

In Nicaragua, on the other hand, the entire top leadership of the FSLN united around the political course that by the end of 1989 had gutted the workers and farmers government. There was no coup, no jailings or murders, not even a change of personnel.

The FSLN regime that was defeated electorally in February 1990 had already ceased to be a workers and farmers government.

February 1990 elections

The Sandinista leadership transformed the FSLN into a bourgeois electoral machine in 1989 and early 1990. They went into the February 1990 elections anticipating they would win at the polls, but at the same time paving the way for a coalition government in which they would include some bourgeois opposition figures. The final documents in this issue, prepared in late 1989, assumed the FSLN would gain a majority vote in the elections.

The Sandinista leadership's reversal of their anti-capitalist course, however, was not sufficient to convince Washington that an FSLN-led government — which would still be looked to by large numbers of working people to use the momentum from an election victory to a return to a revolutionary road — could be a reliable client for imperialism in the region. Washington helped patch together and finance a coalition of bourgeois parties to challenge the FSLN in the elections. Heterogeneous in composition, the National Opposition Union (UNO) included liberal bourgeois forces that had been part of the anti-Somoza fight in the 1970s (some of whom were aligned with the FSLN briefly), conservative politicians and businessmen, contra leaders, and two Stalinist organizations in the labor movement that had long opposed the FSLN.

Workers both in Nicaragua and throughout the world had an important stake in the outcome of the election. As an editorial in the *Militant* the week of the voting pointed out, UNO "makes no bones about its ties to Washington. Far from it. If

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14. For more on the 1919 revolutions in Hungary and Bavaria and the lessons from their defeats drawn by the Communist International in Lenin's time, see Farrell Dobbs, *Revolutionary Continuity: Birth of the Communist Movement, 1918-1922* (New York: Pathfinder, 1983). For more on the experience of other workers and farmers governments in this century, see in particular Joseph Hansen *The Workers and Farmers Government* and Jack Barnes *The Workers and Farmers Government in the United States*, both published by Pathfinder.

13. The speech can be found in the pamphlet by Fidel Castro entitled *Cuba Will Never Adopt Capitalist Methods* (New York: Pathfinder, 1988).



Cuban revolution gave unstinting aid to workers and peasants of Nicaragua. Above, 1987 march in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, greets Cuban ship bringing supplies.

CYNDI KERR

12. The fight for national liberation, and the Stalinists' counterrevolutionary reversal of it, see "Their Trotsky and Ours: Communist Continuity Today" by Jack Barnes and "Communism and the Fight for a Popular Revolutionary Government: 1848 to Today" by Mary-Alice Waters in *New Internationalist*, nos. 1 and 3; the theses and report by V.I. Lenin on the national and colonial question in *Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite! Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress, 1920*, which outline the programmatic foundations of the communist approach; and *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution, The Third International after Lenin*, and *Leon Trotsky on China*, by communist leader Leon Trotsky. For the experience in Cuba, see *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution: A Marxist Appreciation* by Joseph Hansen.

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victorious it would establish a government subservient to the U.S. rulers' economic and political interests. . . . The FSLN clearly stands for the right of the Nicaraguan people to their sovereignty and self-determination. Its victory over UNO in the elections would be a further demonstration that working people in that country refuse to bow to Washington's dictates." A victory by UNO would narrow the space for workers and peasants to organize against the rollback of gains they had conquered following the July 1979 revolution.

But the FSLN leadership's social and political course following the defeat of the contras had led to an accelerating demobilization and disorientation of working people in Nicaragua. Given the government's record in practice, the FSLN election slogan — "We are winning. Everything will be better" — rang hollow in the ears of growing numbers of toilers. As a result, UNO won a hearing for its demagogic argument that the only way forward

was to elect a new government able to negotiate aid and investment from the U.S. and other imperialist powers, thereby alleviating the spiraling economic crisis devastating toilers in the city and countryside. The FSLN was unable to attract larger layers of the middle class, and the petty bourgeoisie in its big majority rallied to the UNO campaign as well. Although the FSLN received the largest number of votes of any single party, the UNO coalition won the elections, placing Violeta Chamorro, figurehead of the liberal bourgeois opposition, in the presidency.

The FSLN leadership rapidly pledged to help lead an orderly transition to the new regime. Outgoing president Daniel Ortega declared the election results a step toward the "consolidation of democracy" and sought to assure his supporters that the revolution was not over — the FSLN would continue to govern "from below," a phrase that was rapidly to become more and more empty of any revolutionary content and sour in the ears of working people in Nicaragua.

"For the time being we are determined to contribute to the maintenance of stability," said FSLN commander Tomás Borge, former head of the interior ministry, in a May 1990 interview, "and to contribute to the maintenance of this government during the six years it is scheduled to govern Nicaragua in accordance with the law."

The FSLN leadership discouraged strikes or other protests, encouraging working people to rely on FSLN deputies in the National Assembly to act for them. Anything that threatened "stability," they argued, would dampen prospects for foreign capitalist investment and could even bring on U.S. aggression.

In April 1990 the Chamorro forces formed a coalition government of the UNO forces, including liberals, conservatives, and some ex-contras. As part of the transition agreement with the FSLN leadership, a few of its leaders remained in the government, most notably Gen. Humberto Ortega, who was kept on as head of the army. Some top police officials who were in the FSLN also stayed on the job. The decision by the new bourgeois government to retain Sandinistas in these positions registered a combination of two factors: first, the existing relationship of forces in Nicaragua, eleven years after a mass, popular revolution that had destroyed the old bourgeois army and put a new army in its place under FSLN command; and second, the



Tens of thousands of workers and youth from the United States and other countries followed the "Managua trail" to participate in the revolution. Above, participants in the Benjamin Linder Peace Brigade in Managua, Nicaragua's capital city, in 1988.

political about-face by the FSLN leadership, culminating in its decision to serve as a prop for capitalist rule and defense of the bourgeois state in Nicaragua.

The retention of Humberto Ortega as head of the army, however, displeased both Chamorro's most conservative Nicaraguan allies and Washington. The U.S. rulers have used this as one of the pretexts to dole out aid to the new Nicaraguan government with an eyedropper, with even these droplets being bestowed or withheld as rewards or punishment depending on the regime's degree of servility.

Washington's failure to come through with any substantial package of grants and loans during the four years since the election, as Nicaragua sinks deeper and deeper into poverty, has also accelerated the pace at which rival bourgeois forces in the UNO coalition have fallen out among themselves. In September 1992 UNO's delegation in the National Assembly expelled from the coalition those mem-

Out of deepening capitalist crisis and the resistance it will spur, a new generation of working-class fighters will emerge in Nicaragua

bers closest to President Chamorro and her top cabinet aide, Antonio Lacayo, and then walked out of the legislative body in January 1993, depriving it of a quorum for a full year. Only in January 1994 did further splits in UNO once again make it possible for the National Assembly to function.

Prospects for Cuban revolution

The victories of the Grenada and Nicaraguan revolutions in 1979 had given great new impetus to the socialist revolution in Cuba. The mass mobilizations against Washington's threats and provocations in the opening years of the 1980s, and the formation of the volunteer Territorial Troop Militia in 1981, drew millions of Cuban workers and farmers into revolutionary political activity in ways that had been on the decline over the previous decade. Despite rising productivity and an improving standard of living in the 1970s, Cuba had been marked by growing social stratification and political demobilization and retreat of working people, in large part as a result of the Cuban government's adoption of economic planning and management priorities, and related political policies, modeled on those of the Soviet bureaucratic regime.

Cuban communists had never retreated from their internationalist commitment to aid those fighting imperialist oppression anywhere in the world, as witnessed by the hundreds of thousands of Cubans who volunteered for duty in Angola from 1975 on. But the revolutionary prospects opened in the Americas at the beginning of the 1980s created the conditions to begin reversing the increasingly negative economic, social, and political consequences of the domestic course embarked upon over the previous decade. A new trail began to be blazed with political changes in economic priorities in late 1984, leading to the launching in early 1986 of what was called the rectification process. The political course that had been argued for by Ernesto Che Guevara during the early 1960s, and that had been implemented in limited ways in those years, was once again put forward by Cuban president Fidel Castro as an example to be studied and emulated.

Voluntary work brigades were relaunched in the latter 1980s to meet pressing social needs such as housing and day care. Steps were taken to begin decreasing the gap between the highest- and lowest-paid workers by raising the living standards of the worst-off layers in the countryside and cities. Policies were initiated to counter the growth of those profiteering off shortages of housing and food. Action was taken to eliminate privileges and mobilize against abuses, waste, and outright corruption by growing middle-class layers in state enterprises and the apparatus of the party and state.

Food self-sufficiency was put forward as an urgent priority by the Cuban leadership, as it had been prior to the decision in the 1970s to accept investment priorities and trading policies pressed on them by the Moscow-dominated Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon). New projects were launched to develop and diversify industrial production. Special volunteer labor contin-

gents began to be organized as a political vanguard within the working class. Taken together, the political dynamic of these measures was to begin renewing and strengthening the organization and mobilization of expanding layers of the working class as a conscious communist leadership of the Cuban toilers. The decisive victory of the Cuban, Angolan, and Namibian forces at Cuito Cuanavale in early 1988, and the consequent decision of the South African apartheid regime to open negotiations leading to withdrawal from Angola and independence for Namibia, gave another gigantic boost to the confidence and combativity of the communist vanguard in Cuba.

The cumulative effects of the defeats of the workers and farmers governments first in Grenada and then in Nicaragua over the 1980s, however, and their impact in pushing back revolutionary struggles elsewhere in Central America and the Caribbean, dealt a political blow to the Cuban revolution. There was no longer what Fidel Castro had called another "true and profound revolution" moving toward socialism anywhere in the Americas, or in the world. With the Stalinists' bloody destruction of the Maurice Bishop-led New Jewel Movement in Grenada, and the FSLN's rejection of a proletarian course, there was no longer another revolutionary leadership that held state power and used it to advance the class interests of workers and farmers at home and internationally. In this way, Cuban communists were once again alone.

Coming on the heels of these political setbacks, Cuba at the opening of the 1990s also confronted the sudden collapse of its long-standing economic aid from the Soviet Union, much of which took the form of import subsidies and higher export prices than could be fetched by hard-currency trade on the world capitalist market. The ensuing shortages and economic dislocation brought to an end many initiatives at the heart of the rectification campaign, such as the volunteer construction minibrigades and vanguard contingents, and cut deeply into the living conditions of working people and the production capacity of Cuban agriculture and industry.

The future of the Cuban revolution — today being forced to retreat under pressure of the most difficult economic conditions it has ever faced — will not be settled in Cuba alone, however. Struggles by workers and farmers in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the United States, and around the world in the years ahead will be decisive to the ability of the Cuban working class to defend its socialist conquests. A new generation of Cuban revolutionists confronts the challenge of strengthening the vanguard social and political role of the working class; their success will determine prospects of reconquering socialist policies that the Cuban revolution is being forced to retreat from today. And those prospects will improve as the conflicts and crises generated by the growing disorder of the world capitalist system create conditions in the Americas and elsewhere for popular struggles and rebellions, for the forging of new working-class leaderships, and for renewed revolutionary victories.

FSLN's evolution since 1990

Today the FSLN functions as a bourgeois opposition party in Nicaragua with the goal of regaining office through the 1996 elections. Within this electoralist framework, the FSLN leadership responds to strikes or other social conflicts by speaking as an instrument for class reconciliation, one that is based among and sympathetic to the popular masses, but that speaks and acts on behalf of the stability of the nation as a whole. This political character of the

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FSLN was affirmed and deepened at the Sandinistas' July 1991 congress, which officially replaced the Historic Program as the organization's guide with a new "Principles and Program" document explicitly aimed at achieving class peace and "stability."

While strikes by workers are inevitable given the deep economic crisis, former president Daniel Ortega said in his closing speech to the congress, "the causes for the strikes must be found, to then avoid the strikes, to avoid more tension." The aim of the FSLN, Ortega said, must be to "incorporate people from different economic classes and social sectors . . . so that we turn the FSLN in this new phase into a political force that is capable of representing . . . all the social sectors and all the economic sectors in our country."

Also speaking at the FSLN congress, Chamorro cabinet chief Antonio Lacayo pointedly told delegates he was "pleased with the policy of national reconciliation and your pledge to work for a social and economic pact" between contending classes.

A February 1994 statement by the FSLN National Directorate on the sixtieth anniversary of Sandino's death described the current organization this way: "The FSLN is open to all sectors of Nicaraguan society and aspires to represent all of society,

with little or no means of support.

With occasional mild criticisms, the FSLN leadership has supported the antiworker, anti-peasant austerity measures imposed by the Chamorro government. Sandinista leaders have backed the return of expropriated factories to former capitalist owners, so long as they were not open Somozaists. In a November 1993 interview with the Nicaraguan newspaper *El Semanario*, FSLN commander Bayardo Arce said that the privatization of the telephone and postal service, the Nicaraguan Institute of Energy, and the waterworks and sewerage system were "absolutely necessary," while opposing privatization of health care, schooling, and social security. Arce said that Daniel Ortega, "who is sometimes singled out as the [FSLN] spokesman, has been very clear, stating that he does not want us to return to the decade of the '70s and that we clearly cannot return to the '80s."

But all the talk about *concertación* and class peace, and all the efforts to impose them, have not brought economic and social stability to Nicaragua. Some 60 percent of the population is unemployed or underemployed. Real wages, health care, and education are all on the decline. Tens of thousands of peasant families who became refugees during the war, and many in the ranks of both the Sandinista and

privatization policy.

More important, public transportation workers waged a hard-fought strike in September 1993, winning their demand that the government repeal a new vehicle tax and roll back fuel price increases. When the government reneged on the agreement in January 1994, the workers relaunched the strike, suspending it in early February when the government agreed to return to the negotiating table and to release all arrested strikers with no reprisals against them.

In a year-end interview in December 1993, Gen. Humberto Ortega sought to justify the use of what once had been a revolutionary army to defend the interests of the bourgeois government and the class of exploiting landlords and factory owners it represents. "It is important to realize that ours is a national army," Ortega told Managua TV Channel 4. "It is no longer an army responsible to a political party, as it was in the past. In the past, we were a direct expression of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, a party. It is no longer that way. We know it is important to be an institution of the Nicaraguan state that serves all Nicaraguans, regardless of their political, ideological, or religious position."

Ortega failed to point out that under capitalism whenever one serves "all," those with the greatest wealth get the best service.

Even apologists for the course of the Sandinista leadership have been shaken by their more and more overt actions in defense of capitalist profits, property, and prerogatives. For example, the year-end review in the January 1994 issue of *Barricada Internacional* — produced by cadres of the FSLN and their supporters from abroad — frets that "the tacit support that the FSLN has given the government has cost the party sympathizers and damaged its prestige and that of its leaders in the eyes of many people, given that the deterioration in social services and the resulting misery have reached unbearable levels." And referring to the army's suppression of a rebellion by former FSLN soldiers in Estelí in July 1993, killing up to sixty of them, the *Barricada Internacional* article comments that "Humberto Ortega apparently wanted to prove to society that he could restore order, but he was widely criticized for the brutality of the response. Rank and file Sandinistas were among the most outraged."¹⁵

Debates over the FSLN leadership's course are surfacing in the press and publications in Nicaragua. An opinion article in the Managua daily *El Nuevo Diario* in December 1993, for example, commented on President Chamorro's announcement two months earlier at an armed forces celebration that Humberto Ortega would retire from his position sometime in 1994.¹⁶ Chamorro's seemingly abrupt announcement of the general's retirement, the writer of the opinion article said, "demonstrated Sandinism's lack of real weight in its relations with the government, so painstakingly and at such great cost worked out by the national [FSLN] leadership, using the argument — contradicted by reality — of preserving to the utmost the gains of the revolution. . . . The national leadership apparently got itself into trouble without any hope of escape when it gave up the Sandinista Front's political program, which has never lost its force. . . ."

No alternative course presented

Despite various degrees of disappointment and disillusionment, there is no organized political voice in the FSLN or in the working-class movement in Nicaragua, or any broad political current in the world workers movement, that openly faces up to the reality that the FSLN as

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Sandinista troops capture U.S. pilot Eugene Hasenfus, whose plane was downed by Nicaraguan army in October 1986. This partially exposed Washington's direction of contra war.

whether from a position of opposition or while in power, in order to achieve democracy, economic development, and social justice. Its primary concerns are the poor and unemployed, who constitute the majority of Nicaraguans."

The FSLN sought to ratify its class-collaborationist course in mid-1990 by applying to join, as a full member, the Socialist International — the loose association of bourgeois social democratic parties dominated by imperialist labor parties in Britain, Germany, France, Spain, Sweden, and elsewhere in Western Europe. *La Prensa*, the Managua daily that has long served as a mouthpiece for Nicaragua's capitalist class, hailed the FSLN leadership's action, saying the newspaper "regards it as splendid news."

A class gulf began opening between the top FSLN leadership and the workers and peasants as the momentum of the revolution slowed in the late 1980s. As in other Third World countries with limited modern class development and low levels of literacy, a disproportionate number of central FSLN leaders were middle class in their origins, with several having been born into the country's leading landowning or other ruling capitalist families. While outstanding individual workers leaders have emerged from such social backgrounds over the past 150 years, alien class pressures and values can and do mount in leaderships with such a composition under conditions where the working class and other toilers are pushed toward the margins of politics and are unable to place their stamp on the organization and its leading committees.

That is what happened in Nicaragua throughout the latter half of the 1980s. The FSLN's course blocked the road to bringing more workers into the leadership. The accelerating class polarization within the Sandinista movement inevitably bred layers that had a material stake in maintaining their relatively privileged positions. The festering corruption came to a head publicly in the weeks prior to Chamorro's inauguration in 1990, as many Sandinista officials shamelessly grabbed government-owned homes, lands, and other resources for their personal use. This wholesale public larceny became widely known in Nicaragua as *la piñata*, after the Latin American holiday custom of breaking open a suspended papier-mâché animal and then scrambling for the falling goodies. Meanwhile, the majority of the demobilized ranks from both the Sandinista and contra armies have been left

contra armies, returned to no homes and often no land, while former contra officers and bourgeois opposition figures who went into exile after 1979 returned and had land or other property abundantly bestowed on them.

The already paltry foreign aid the Chamorro government had promised it would attract actually declined further in 1993, as imperialist governments and institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund demanded ever more severe cuts in social services and food subsidies and more sweeping privatization of state-owned properties. Imperialist trusts have been unwilling to put money into Nicaraguan industry, which is outmoded, noncompetitive, and has a unionized workforce forged in a revolution that despite recent setbacks remains more combative and class conscious than in neighboring countries. Some \$10 billion is owed to imperialist banks and international financial institutions, which skim tens of millions of dollars in interest payments from the wealth produced by Nicaraguan workers and peasants each year.

Reaction to FSLN course

From within the popular masses no coherent class-struggle political alternative to the FSLN leadership's course could arise under conditions of retreat and deprivation. There has been, however, continued resistance by layers of workers and peasants to the worsening conditions they face as a result of the capitalist crisis and the government's tightening austerity measures. Trade unionists, for example, have spoken out over the past year against the FSLN leadership's decision to support, with some cosmetic reforms, the heart of the government's

For further reading . . .

"The workers and farmers government is the most powerful instrument the working class can wield as it moves along its line of march toward establishing a workers state"—JACK BARNES

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Lt. Col. Oliver North ran bipartisan covert war from White House basement.

Continued from ISR 9

constituted today is no longer a revolutionary organization. It has been transformed by its central leadership into a radical bourgeois electoral party that is an obstacle to the working class regaining the class independence, organization, and self-confidence needed to wage the necessary battle to build a communist party and once again overturn capitalist rule.

As the documents that round out this issue explain, there is no shortcut to that goal. The FSLN earned its place as the political vanguard of the workers and peasants of Nicaragua through enormous effort and sacrifice; it led them in the victorious popular insurrection of July 1979 and in carrying out the anticapitalist course during the opening years of the revolution that advanced the class interests of the toilers and made it possible for them to defeat the U.S.-backed counterrevolution. All sorts of Stalinist and ultraleftist forces disqualified themselves for leadership, aiming factional barbs at the FSLN while standing aside from the central tasks of the struggle. Some of these forces have ended up in the UNO coalition, while others continue to function as ultraleft sects. None point a path toward building a proletarian communist party in Nicaragua.

Like working people in other countries, however, workers and peasants in Nicaragua today live and work in a world marked by a global economic depression, social crisis, intensifying capitalist trade conflicts, growing pressures toward imperialist military intervention and wars, and the rising class tensions and political polarization that inevitably accompany such instability. Events in the final months of 1993 and opening weeks of 1994 alone give the lie to the myth promoted both by the current bourgeois government in Nicaragua and by the FSLN leadership, each in their own way, that capitalism can somehow bring economic development, social peace, and political democracy to the peoples of Latin America.

In the northern Argentine province of Santiago del Estero in December 1993, thousands of workers rose up in rebellion, taking over provincial buildings, in protest of the authorities' failure to pay government workers since August. Argentine president Carlos Menem sent in federal police in face of the uprising. Another working-class explosion rocked the northern Argentine city of Tucumán in March 1994.

In January 1994 Mexican troops unleashed bloody repression in the southern state of Chiapas in the wake of widely publicized guerrilla operations in several towns. These events put a spotlight on the desperate living conditions of, and discrimination against, the majority Indian population of Chiapas, most of whom are poor peasants and farm laborers, as well as on the re-

pressive policies of the Mexican regime.

These class conflicts sharpened in the two Latin American countries most often portrayed today as among the "economic miracles" of the capitalist market system — two of the countries into which the most capital is pouring. Nicaragua, on the other hand, has joined Haiti in recent years as one of the two poorest countries in the Americas.

Reknitting revolutionary continuity

Out of deepening capitalist crisis and the resistance it will spur, a new generation of working-class fighters will emerge in Nicaragua who will retrace their continuity to the Marxist road charted in the 1960s and 1970s by Carlos Fonseca and codified in the FSLN's Historic Program. No one can predict the forms or the pace of such struggles. But like workers elsewhere around the world, fighters in Nicaragua will find their way back to the lessons of the socialist revolution in Cuba, to the writings and speeches of communist leaders such as Ernesto Che Guevara and Fidel Castro. They will learn from the accumulated class-struggle experience of the working class in other times and other parts of the world — from the writings of V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, and other Bolshevik leaders of the Russian revolution; from the writings of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the founders of the modern communist workers movement.

The experiences from the fight to make the socialist revolution in the Americas are of great importance for revolutionary-minded workers, farmers, and youth the world over. As the lessons of Contragate confirm once again, every deep-going struggle by working people, no matter where it occurs, will confront the implacable hatred of U.S. capitalism's ruling families, who will use their massive economic and military power — covertly and overtly — to defend their class interests.

But defeats are far from inevitable, despite what petty-bourgeois misleaderships preach to working people and rebel youth the world over. Whether in the classical Stalinist variant, in the libertarian anarchist packaging of a Noam Chomsky, or in the apologetics of a Daniel Ortega, the bottom line is always the same: It's unwise to pursue a revolutionary road anywhere in the world today. The odds are against you. The rich and the mighty will punish you. Lasting victories are not possible. The fight for socialism is a utopia. So lower your sights to something you might be capable of doing.

For communists, on the contrary, the prospect of successful anti-capitalist revolutions is an eminently practical political question. The objective preconditions for proletarian revolutions already exist, and these conditions have ripened throughout expanding portions of the world since the opening decades of this century. The working class is larger and stronger than it has ever been. It is more international in its scope, spread across every inhabited continent on earth. It is more color-blind, more multilingual and multinational in every major imperialist country. More women than ever before have been drawn into all aspects of economic production and social life, from Managua to Manitoba.

Moreover, the biggest obstacle to working-class victories and advances — the Stalinist counterfeit of Marxism that was accepted for good coin by millions for some six decades — has crumbled. The police-state apparatuses of the privileged castes in the grotesquely deformed workers states of Eastern Europe and the USSR have fallen, along with the international murder machine that did the bidding of the Moscow regime around the world.

For Marxists there is nothing inevitable about most victories or defeats. The outcome depends above all on the courage, capacities, internalized class-struggle experience, and political clarity of a communist vanguard forged by revolutionary workers in the course of deepening battles by the working class, farmers, and youth.

When workers and their oppressed and exploited allies enter into revolutionary struggle, there is never a guarantee of lasting victory, and there never can be. The workers' line of march worldwide is a long and jagged one. In the most fundamental sense, there will never be a lasting victory

until the proletarian revolution has triumphed on a world scale, socialism has begun to be built, and the state and other institutions of class society have started to wither away.

In any particular revolution there is never any way to be sure beforehand what social, political, and military forces will bear down on the triumphant workers and their vanguard political organizations. Even the most outstanding leaderships produced by the toilers have been shattered under such pressures, or have been forced into unanticipated retreats.

Was the October 1917 revolution worth it, given the conquest of the Stalinist counterrevolution in little more than a decade? Was the Vietnamese revolution worth it, despite the horrible toll inflicted on the workers and peasants by Washington both during and after the war? Was the Grenada revolution worth it, knowing what we now know of the outcome due to the crimes of Stalinist assassins? Was the Cuban revolution worth it, in face of the grinding economic and social pressures the toilers face today, with no assurances of when or how their current forced retreat will be reversed? Was the Nicaraguan revolution worth it, given the story traced in the pages that follow?

Communist workers unequivocally answer "yes" in each case. Because what is the lasting result of every deep-going popular revolution — and what is of decisive importance to the future of the toiling majority of humanity — is the accumulated revolutionary experience of the working-class vanguard, its continuity of struggles, and the lessons from those victories and defeats absorbed over generations.

The world class struggle and prospects for the toilers were changed forever by what the Bolshevik-led workers and peasants accomplished more than seventy-five years ago. Revolutionary-minded youth in the United States and



Nicaraguan president Violeta Chamorro with army chief Humberto Ortega at her inauguration ceremony in 1990. Today FSLN functions as a bourgeois opposition party, supporting anti-working-class measures of government.

elsewhere were won to the communist movement by what they saw happening in Cuba in the early 1960s, and that socialist revolution has swelled the ranks of fighters for national liberation and socialism throughout the world ever since. Several generations were first impelled into political action by the struggle of the Vietnamese, Grenadian, and Nicaraguan people, and thousands of them have been attracted to communist organizations as a result of those experiences.

The writings of Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, Maurice Bishop, and many other revolutionists and communists; the programmatic documents of the world workers movement, from the International Working Men's Association of Marx and Engels to the Communist International in Lenin's time and those who fought to carry on its work following the Stalinist degeneration — all these are a permanent legacy of the revolutionary struggles of the working class. They are part of the political arsenal of the international workers movement that embraces the works of other outstanding revolutionists such as Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, and Thomas Sankara, as well as leaders of the communist movement in the United States.

Writing in the aftermath of the defeat of the world's first workers government — the Paris Commune, which was drowned in blood in 1871 by the bourgeoisie of France after just seventy-two days in power — Karl Marx pointed out that the workers "did not expect miracles from the Commune. . . . [They] have no ready-made utopias to introduce *par décret du peuple* [by decree of the people]. They know that in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending by its own economical agencies, they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances and men. They have no ideals to realize, but to set free elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant."

In that most fundamental sense, Marx said, "The great

The struggle for a proletarian party

In Defense of Marxism

THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTRADICTIONS OF THE SOVIET UNION

by Leon Trotsky

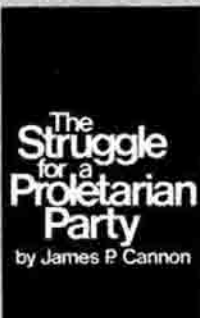
Why only a party that fights to bring growing numbers of workers into its ranks and leadership can chart a revolutionary course. In response to rising pressures of bourgeois public opinion on the middle classes in the buildup toward World War II, Trotsky explains why workers must oppose imperialist assaults on the degenerated Soviet workers state, and defends the materialist foundations of scientific socialism. 280 pp., \$18.95

The Struggle for a Proletarian Party

by James P. Cannon

The political and organizational principles of Marxism, presented in a debate that unfolded as Washington prepared to drag U.S. working people into the slaughter of World War II. A companion volume to *In Defense of Marxism*. 302 pp., \$19.95

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1992 student protest in Argentina. Working-class rebellion in northern Argentina last December and peasant actions in Mexico spotlight brewing class conflicts throughout Latin America.

social measure of the Commune was its own working existence."¹⁷

A quarter of a century earlier, Marx as a young revolutionist had summed up in the following words the germ of a new world outlook that would soon lead him to be recruited by revolutionary workers and join them in launching the first modern communist organization: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it."¹⁸

More than a century later, in February 1962, the general assembly of the newly victorious socialist revolution in Cuba put forward the same perspective in a declaration to the oppressed and exploited throughout the Americas and the world: "It is the duty of every revolutionist to make the revolution."¹⁹

That strategic orientation — phrased in different ways, but arising from the practical experiences of the world working class spanning a century and a half of struggle — remains the starting point for communists to this day. The victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat is inevitable, opening the construction of socialism on a world scale. How and when the working class and its allies will triumph, however, we do not know. But we do know that the road will be longer and bloodier if revolutionists do not orient, above all, toward building a communist organization to

make the revolution and dare to seize the chance when it occurs.

For more than a half decade after the 1979 revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada, the revolutionary government in Cuba was no longer the sole exemplar of a workers and farmers government, as it had been for the previous twenty years. Understanding the lessons from the accomplishments and, then, the defeats of those two workers and farmers governments is part of the necessary preparation to defend the gains of the Cuban revolution in the most effective way — by building communist workers parties throughout the Americas and throughout the world that can do in those countries what the Cuban workers have done.

The documents in this issue of *New Internationalist* stand as a record of how a party of industrial workers in the United States, the Socialist Workers Party, and communist leagues in a number of other imperialist countries, responded to the Nicaraguan revolution as communists, participated in it, defended it, and sought to learn from it and share its lessons with other working people. These resolutions and reports are also a powerful vindication of revolutionary journalism. Because all of them draw on a decade of week-by-week reportage from inside the Nicaraguan revolution, and from inside that country's toiling classes, organized by the Managua bureau of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. The practical conclusions and theoretical insights presented in these pages are the fruits of work by not only the more than twenty volunteer members of the bureau's writing staff over that ten-year period, but also by all those whose financial contributions and sales efforts to get working-class literature into the hands of as many readers as possible have made it possible to sustain these publications.

None of the documents have been edited or changed from how they first appeared between 1979 and 1989, except for the addition of subheadings, the correction of typographical and grammatical errors and a few mistaken dates or figures, and the preparation of explanatory notes to aid the reader. Reading these ten years of resolutions and reports is not only one of the best ways to study the Nicaraguan revolution and its turning points. It is also a way for working-class fighters and youth — wherever they live and work — to understand the importance of forging a communist party to prepare for the coming class battles with the employers and their governments.

March 24, 1994

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A MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS AND THEORY

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by Steve Clark

"Maurice Bishop and Bernard Coard personified two irreconcilable political courses for the Grenada revolution," Clark writes—one rooted in the revolutionary continuity of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, the other in the Stalinist counterrevolution. Issue no. 6 also includes "Cuba's Rectification Process" by Fidel Castro and "The 50-Year Domestic Contra Operation" by Larry Seigle. \$10.00

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The world importance of the struggle to overthrow the apartheid system, and of the vanguard role of the African National Congress, which is committed to lead the national, democratic revolution in South Africa to a successful conclusion. Only from among the most committed cadres of this ANC-led struggle, Barnes writes, can the working class begin forging a communist leadership. \$9.00

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THE COMING REVOLUTION IN SOUTH AFRICA



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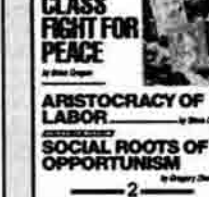
Communism and the Fight for a Popular Revolutionary Government: 1848 to Today

by Mary-Alice Waters

Traces the continuity in the fight by the working-class movement over 150 years to wrest political power from the small minority of wealthy property owners, whose class rule, Waters says, is inseparably linked to the "misery, hunger, and disease of the great majority of humanity." Also includes "A Nose for Power: Preparing the Nicaraguan Revolution" by Tomás Borge. \$8.00

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THE WORKING CLASS FIGHT FOR PEACE



No. 2

The Working-Class Fight for Peace

by Brian Grogan

Can lasting peace be achieved in the world until workers and farmers take political power—including the power to make war—from the hands of the capitalist rulers? This article says no. Also includes article on the aristocracy of labor by Steve Clark. \$8.00

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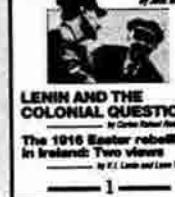
Their Trotsky and Ours: Communist Continuity Today

by Jack Barnes

From 1923 until his death, Leon Trotsky fought to build a movement to advance the revolutionary political course defended by V.I. Lenin against the counterrevolution eventually headed by Joseph Stalin. How do Trotsky's ideas and actions fit into the continuity of the movement for communism, from Marx's and Engels's time to our own? \$8.00

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THEIR TROTSKY AND OURS COMMUNIST CONTINUITY TODAY



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South Africa

Continued from front page
dent F.W. de Klerk, KwaZulu chief minister and Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, and King Goodwill Zwelithini, a traditional leader of Zulus who is allied with Buthelezi. Some 3,000 troops have been deployed in Natal, and 1,000 more have been called up.

Zwelithini and Buthelezi refused an ANC proposal for free political activity in the province and reiterated their call for a boycott of the elections.

Following the meeting, Mandela warned against "exaggerated expectations" from negotiations in the short term. "I cannot see a resolution before the elections," he said. "This problem can be resolved only by the government of national unity, a body which will have legislative powers."

On April 10, Mandela addressed some 15,000 people in Soweto on the anniversary of the assassination of ANC and South African Communist Party leader Chris Hani. He told those assembled in the stadium that the ANC had offered Zwelithini "the same rights as Queen Elizabeth of Britain," but that the king had rejected this proposal.

Buthelezi once again demanded the elections be postponed. The ANC has rejected this requirement on several occasions as an obstacle to the permanent riddance of apartheid. "That [election] day is sacrosanct and there can be no compromise over it whatsoever," Mandela said.

In order to maintain their privileged position within the administration of KwaZulu, Buthelezi and other Inkatha leaders have actively collaborated with forces inside the South African government and police to organize bloody attacks on supporters of the ANC. Their thuggery has extended indiscriminately to other working people throughout the Natal region. The overwhelming majority of the victims are Black.

At least 552 people were killed in political violence during March in South Africa, more than double that of February. Three hundred sixty-one of these deaths were in Natal.

On April 13, eight men distributing pro-election pamphlets produced by South Africa's Transitional Executive Council were shot and hacked to death at a rural school in Natal. Police refused to identify five people who they arrested for the attack, which took place in Thafamasi, about 50 miles north of Durban.

International mediators arrive

A team of seven mediators, including former U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger and former British foreign secretary Lord Carrington, arrived in South Africa April 12 to hold talks with the ANC and Inkatha on how much regional autonomy should be granted to leaders of the KwaZulu Bantustan. The ANC had agreed to the negotiating sessions in earlier talks with Inkatha.

Buthelezi used the mediators' arrival to press his demand that the elections be postponed. "The date of the election is not on the agenda," Mandela reiterated. Kissinger admitted that the election "is not a subject on which mediation can take place." On April 12, 90 percent of ambulance and emergency workers in Natal struck after wage talks failed with the Natal provincial administration.

News reports also said that hundreds of teachers employed by the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture in Edendale, Natal, marched to the department's central office on April 7 to demand that responsibility for education be handed over to the TEC. Marchers also demanded freedom of association, freedom to conduct voter education for students, and recognition of the South African Democratic Teachers Union.

— CALENDAR —

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

March for Immigrant Rights. Sat., May 28, 10 a.m. Meet at corner of Broadway and Washington, march to Los Angeles City Hall (corner of First and Main). Sponsored by California Latino Civil Rights Network, L.A. region. For more information: (818) 282-9431.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Class Series on South Africa Today. Saturdays at 4 p.m. April 23: The Role of the Working Class and Peasantry. April 30: The Leadership Role of the ANC. May 7: The South African Revolution and World Politics. Pathfinder Bookstore, 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene St. For more information: (910) 272-5996.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Elections in South Africa: ANC Leads Fight For Democratic, Nonracial, Nonsexist Republic. Speaker: Omari Musa, Socialist Workers Party, member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 1-326, recently returned from three-week tour as an international election observer throughout South Africa. Sat., April 23, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: \$4. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

IOWA

Des Moines

The Stock Market Crisis and Clinton's Offensive Against Working People — How to Fight Back. Speaker: Norton Sandler, Socialist Workers Party National Committee, member of International Association of Machinists Local 254. Sat., April 23, 7:30 p.m. 2105 Forest Ave. Donation: \$3. Translation into Spanish. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Police Assault in Dorchester Exposes Myth of the "War on Drugs." Speaker: Maceo Dixon, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 23, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. (corner Mass Ave.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

Grand Opening of New Pathfinder Bookstore. Celebrate the Gains of the Freedom Struggle in South Africa and the Publication of Nelson

Mandela Speaks. Sun., April 24. Open House: 2 p.m.; International Buffet: 4 p.m.; Program and video of Nelson Mandela: 5 p.m. 59 Fourth Ave. (Corner of Bergen, near Atlantic and Pacific subway stops). Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish and French. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

Manhattan

Yugoslavia: Should Workers and Youth Support U.S./UN Intervention? Sat., April 23, 7:30 p.m. 214-16 Ave. A (Between 13th and 14th Streets). Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 388-9346.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

What's Behind the "War on Crime?" Sun., April 24, 6 p.m. 2000-C S. Elm-Eugene Street. Donation: \$3. Tel: (910) 272-5996.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution. Speaker: Aaron Ruby, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 23, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation \$5. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution. Speaker: Barbara Greenway, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress. Sat., April 23, 7 p.m. 147 E. 900 S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

How to Defend Black Rights in an Era of

Economic Depression. Speaker: Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Transportation Union. Sat., April 23, 7:30 p.m. 1802 Belmont Rd. NW. (at 18th St. NW). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

Celebrate ANC Victory in the First Nonracial Elections in South Africa. Speakers: Students from South Africa; Molly Biehl, visited South Africa, sister of Amy Biehl, activist killed in South Africa; Margrethe Siem, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Transportation Union. Sat., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 1802 Belmont Rd. NW. (at 18th St. NW). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

WEST VIRGINIA

Morgantown

How Can We Protect the Environment? A panel discussion. Sun., April 24, 7 p.m. 242 Walnut St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (304) 296-0055.
South Africa Elections: An Historic Advance. Speakers: Thomas Mathoma, ANC; Greg McCarty, Socialist Workers Party; Dan Weiner, West Virginia University professor. Sat., April 30, 7 p.m. 242 Walnut St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

No to War Threats Against North Korea. Speaker: Kate Rodda, Communist League. Sat., April 23, 7 p.m. 199 High St. Tel: (3) 365-6055.
The Fortex Closure: Another Round of Attacks on Meatworkers. Speaker: Joan Shields, Communist League, member of Meat Workers Union. Sat., April 30, 7 p.m. 199 High St. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

Japanese prime minister resigns

Continued from front page

"used for my political activities." This company has been linked indirectly to Japanese gangsters.

Hosokawa, who came to power eight months ago with a reputation as Japan's cleanest politician, was the fifth Japanese prime minister in as many years. Three of the five resigned in financial or sex scandals.

The resignation "ushers in an extended period of uncertainty in the world's second biggest economy," stated an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, adding that new elections could throw the government into months of gridlock.

Hosokawa stays in power until the ruling seven-party coalition picks a successor or new elections are called.

The *Financial Times* reported April 11 that Japan's coalition government was "close to breaking up," noting that a general election would paralyze the government as trade disputes with the United States approach a critical juncture. A *Times* editorial the following day titled "A Tokyo vacuum" said, "The country is set for several years of rule by unstable coalitions."

A week before his resignation, Hosokawa told a *New York Times* reporter that because the coalition was so divided no major issues were ever discussed for fear the alliance would implode. The *Wall Street Journal* re-

ported April 12 that the rift in the government widened as three of the parties boycotted a meeting called by the other four to pick a new prime minister. Tokyo University professor and government advisor Takeshi Sasaki said, "The Liberal Democratic Party is disintegrating, and to some extent the same thing is starting to happen to the Socialists."

One division in the coalition is over foreign policy. A faction, led by Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata, wants Japan to play a more active military role abroad. The governing coalition is divided over whether to support an economic embargo against North Korea.

Shoichiro Toyoda, chairman of Toyota, said, "It is imperative that the government gets its act together to prevent any further delay in the critical areas of deregulation and economic stimulus."

The Clinton administration counted on Hosokawa to open Japan's markets to increased U.S. exports. Talks between Washington and Tokyo broke off in February when the two sides failed to agree on measures to open Japan's market to imports and reduce its trade surplus.

Washington's efforts to keep the value of the yen high against the dollar continues to squeeze export-oriented Japanese capitalists. According to Keio University economist Haruo Shimada, it is also leading com-

panies to move their production lines to countries where the costs are lower. In 1993 American Honda Motor Co. shipped 23,426 vehicles to Japan, more than the Big Three combined. In March imported vehicles in Japan jumped by 40.7 percent, setting a record.

While the Japanese economy grew at a pathetic one-tenth of 1 percent rate in 1993 and the economy actually shrank 2.2 percent in the last quarter, economic indicators improved slightly in the first quarter of 1994.

No matter who heads the Japanese government, an economic rebound will be difficult. The bubble economy of the 1980s left a large surplus of capacity. Plummeting stock and real estate prices have crippled banks with mountains of bad loans.

Pointing to falling asset prices, falling consumer prices, a yearly 3.1 percent drop in wholesale prices, small wage raises, the increased value of the yen, and the historically low 0.5 percent increase in bank lending, *Financial Times* columnist Gerard Baker concludes, "In short, the conditions are in place for a classic, 1930s-style deflation, a downward spiral of falling prices and falling demand which characterised the Great Depression."

Robert Miller is a member of United Auto Workers Local 365 in Glen Cove, New York.

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Don't get mad, get a *Militant* sub — AP reported that homeless children from Nogales, Mexico,



Harry Ring

make their way across the border to neighboring Nogales, Arizona, through a sewer tunnel, emerging to "beg and steal." The *New York Times* headlined the story "Tunnel Rats' Plague Border City."

Free-market medicine — The Miles company agreed to stop pay-

ing pharmacists \$35 for each consumer they persuaded to switch from a rival's hypertension drug to its product, Adalat. The company said it was merely reimbursing druggists for "cognitive" services. New York's attorney general saw it as turning the pharmacist "into a shill for the drug manufacturer."

Reassuring — A Food and Drug Administration committee says gene-altered tomatoes are "as safe as other currently consumed tomatoes."

It is an astounding system — The Census Bureau reported that in the past 13 years the number of young people working full time but earning less than the poverty level increased 50 percent. The bureau

was moved to describe its finding as "astounding."

Which end? — Egg prices in southern California supermarkets are a third higher than the national average, even though wholesale prices are the same. Speculating that "egg prices might be higher in Los Angeles, but bread might be cheaper," an industry spokesman assured, "It all works out in the end for the consumer."

Rolls 'em in the aisles — Some of the clergy are reportedly livening up their services with humor, some of it derived from such publications as the *Joyful Noiseletter* and *Parish Chute*. Sample: "How do you disperse a

threatening crowd? Take up a collection."

Or that some sow and some reap — Farm Credit Banks of Omaha, a major lender to farmers, paid its top dogs more than \$1.6 million in salaries and bonuses last year. The chairman said separating the compensation into salary and bonus was useful because, "It's hard for farmers to relate to salaries paid in the business world."

The march of technology — During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the corner smoke shop would sell you cigarettes for a penny apiece. Now there's a vending machine that dispenses one cigarette at a time. The price,

we assume, is a tad higher.

Taking care of business — A San Francisco family has been doing nicely with three busy parking lots on land leased from the Port Authority for \$9.75 a month. The deal has been on so long that when the cops decided to check if proper permits had been obtained, it took them a week to convince the Authority it actually owned the property.

Paymates — We reported on Check-a-Mate, specialists in spousal snooping. We don't know if it's a subsidiary, but now there's also Test-a-Mate, which provides entrapment specialists to test fidelity. A brochure explains the purpose is to "Help solidify relationships."

Students, workers in Detroit hear Cuban youth

BY TONI JACKSON

DETROIT — "There are a lot of contrasts here. A lot of abundance. I have seen a little of everything here, the social differences in society with the homeless and the lack of health care. We in Cuba have to improve what we have, but also defend at all costs what we do have. I don't want what I see here, a few get it all, and most get nothing. I want the same for all," said Pável Díaz Hernández. The Cuban youth leader was answering questions from students at Mumford High School here. Díaz addressed 10th and 12th grade classes during a speaking tour of campuses in Michigan, March 28-30.

The visit was organized by the Michigan Faculty-Student Lectures Committee based at Wayne State University, with students from the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University participating.

City council award

The Cuban youth began the tour with an introduction to the Detroit City Council. The body's president, Maryann Mahaffey, presented him with the Spirit of Detroit Award. Díaz addressed the council and thanked it for passing a resolution in support of the third Pastors for Peace Friendship caravan to Cuba.

The Cuban youth also met with activists from the Justice for Cuba Coalition.

At Eastern Michigan University, Díaz addressed a group of 50 youth. A student asked Díaz what Arleen Rodríguez Derivet would have said different from him? Rodríguez, the editor of the Cuban weekly newspaper *Juventud Rebelde* (Rebel Youth) is another Cuban youth leader who was invited by faculty and students to visit the United States with Díaz. The State Department denied her a visa on the grounds that she is a member of the National Assembly, Cuba's parliament.

"Arleen would have spoken from the point of view of a woman in Cuba," Díaz said. "Most men in Cuba will tell you that sexism in our country is gone. And that is fundamentally true. But then it's a woman's turn to say when we get home, who does the cooking, cleaning, etc. We will not find ourselves content until women are truly represented in all levels of society."

At the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, a student asked whether the special period in Cuba had taken a toll on the lead-

ership. Special period is the term used in Cuba to describe the time span since 1989 when a severe economic crisis began, triggered by the end of aid from the former Soviet Union. "A lot of measures that would have been unconscionable 10 years ago are proposed because of the real situation we are in right now," Díaz said. These measures include decriminalization of possession and use of U.S. dollars, legalization of self-employment in dozens of occupations, and increased joint ventures with capitalists from abroad. "A leader capable of adapting to changes, with vision and foresight is necessary, one capable of entering into a discussion on what steps to take, not what we want to do, but what we are forced to do, what we have to do because of the special period," Díaz stated.

Two meetings were held on the Wayne State campus, a day-time event and an evening public meeting, which was cosponsored by the Justice for Cuba Coalition. At the evening gathering several participants asked questions about the U.S. embargo of Cuba.

"There was a time when the United States said Cuba was a satellite of the USSR," Díaz stated. "But the USSR has fallen. Then they said it was our troops in Angola, but the troops are home and are now working in our agriculture. So they need a new pretext. Now they say we need new flexibility in our economy. For example, foreign investment. But today, they try to stop and pressure third countries from making foreign investments in Cuba. So, they have intensified their blockade."

Meeting meatpackers

Díaz was able to meet workers at the Thorn Apple Valley kill plant. Some 40 meatpackers stopped by the plant gate during a work break and asked Díaz questions about Cuba. The workers also described to Díaz the deteriorating working conditions in the plant and the increase in overtime.

In all, the Cuban youth leader spoke to about 300 people, including a meeting at Michigan State University. He was interviewed by WCHB radio and the *Detroit Free Press*.

Toni Jackson is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 26 at the Thorn Apple Valley kill plant.



Cuban youth leader Pável Díaz (left) receives union hat and briefcase from Nathan Head, director of the United Auto Workers civil rights department, in Detroit.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT
Published in the Interest of the Working People
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Thousands of New Yorkers turned out April 15 for a protest against the massive state budget cuts of welfare funds. The day began with a mass rally in Central Park and ended when police attacked some of the protesters who brought their demands to the streets by holding an unscheduled march downtown.

The rally was sponsored by the Citywide Coordinating Committee for Welfare Rights, other welfare groups and several local unions, including District 37 AFSCME; local 1199, Drug and Hospital Union; Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association; and the Social Service Employees Union.

At the rally's height, over 5,000 people, many of them welfare recipients, filled the Central Park band shell area. The rally began with speeches by two local Democratic mayoral aspirants — Herman Badillo and James Scheuer. The audience responded unenthusiastically to what either of these had to say except at one point — when Badillo called for an end to the Vietnam war. The city commissioner of social services, Jack Goldberg, was also scheduled to speak, but was literally hooted off the stage as soon as he appeared.

The rally ended with a demonstration of several thousand who marched from the band shell out onto Fifth Avenue to dramatize their demands. Moving swiftly and shouting slogans such as "End the War, Feed the Poor," the demonstrators went down Fifth Avenue to 42nd St. The protesters were attacked at Grand Central Station by mounted police, who charged up and down the streets and sidewalks, forcing people

into the sides of buildings, injuring some. Thirteen arrests were made, including welfare clients, unionists, and Hulbert James of the National Welfare Rights Association.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
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April 22, 1944

The first war-time strike authorized by a CIO international union is holding firm in its sixth day here [Chicago]. Some 5,000 embattled workers of Montgomery Ward and Co., one of the world's two largest mail order firms, are fighting on the picket line to compel the company to renew its contract with CIO United Mail Order, Warehouse and Retail Employees Local 20, following the failure of the War Labor Board to enforce its three-month-old order against the company.

[President Franklin] Roosevelt had intervened twice in 1942 to compel Ward to accept a previous WLB ruling. In sharp contrast to the speed with which he acts against striking workers, Roosevelt has thus far made no statement condemning the company for its defiance of the WLB nor ordered it to comply with the twice-stated WLB directive to extend the union's contract.

But countering the strikebreaking actions of Roosevelt's political colleagues and the anti-labor smear campaign of the kept press, organized labor support both here and throughout the country is being mobilized behind the strike in the greatest demonstration of union solidarity witnessed during this war. Over 1,600 fellow unionists in Ward's Kansas City outlet last Thursday went out on a one-day sympathy strike. Jeff Craig, organizer for the Detroit Joint Board, and officers of the Detroit Ward local promised to close down Ward's five largest Detroit department stores "unless the President acts to force compliance."

Granma

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An essential source of information on the Cuban revolution.

Stop U.S. bombing in Bosnia

For the first time since World War II, Washington is carrying out direct military intervention in a war in Europe. The bombing of sites near Gorazde, Bosnia, came just weeks after U.S. planes shot down four jets linked to the Serbian regime. These actions can only deepen the war and increase the price in blood the workers and farmers in Bosnia pay. They will also intensify conflicts among the various supposed allies in NATO and outside it.

Contrary to their pretensions, the U.S. rulers have no humanitarian concern whatsoever for the victims of the carnage in the former Yugoslavia. In fact, for the last two years the governments of the United States and most European countries have slammed the door in the face of refugees fleeing the slaughter, which has been organized by rival gangs that were part of the former Stalinist regime before the breakup of Yugoslavia.

All of the debates and decisions by the various imperialist powers on whether and when to intervene in the strife are based on each weighing how best to assert their own economic, political, and strategic military interests.

The bombing in Bosnia was a unilateral act by the rulers in Washington, despite wearing the cloak of NATO. The raid was carried out by U.S. planes and pilots, after debate within the U.S. administration. The move was aimed at asserting Washington's domination in the region, just as the governments of Britain and France maintain troops in Bosnia in order to stake a claim to act militarily in Europe. Bonn is also using the Yugoslav conflict as a pretext to expand deployment of troops outside the borders of Germany.

The fight over Macedonia is another illustration of the competing capitalist forces at play in the Balkans. The Greek government, which is a member of NATO and holds the rotating chair of the European Union, imposed an embargo on Macedonia after Washington recognized the former Yugoslav republic. Athens has allied itself with the regimes in Serbia and Russia in its reactionary, nationalist campaign against recognition of the former Yugoslav re-

public and its blockade of the Macedonian border — a virtual act of war. At the same time, to advance Washington's interests of domination in the region, hundreds of U.S. troops are stationed in Macedonia as so-called peacekeepers.

The rift between Washington and Moscow is also widening as a result of the stepped-up U.S. military intervention in Bosnia. Russian president Boris Yeltsin complained of the lack of "prior consultation" before the bombing runs. The Russian government has more or less openly sided with the right-wing Serbian forces besieging Sarajevo, Gorazde, and other Bosnian cities.

The slaughter in the former Yugoslavia is not an ethnic struggle. The forces fighting there are led by contending bureaucrats of the former privileged ruling caste who want to integrate the economies of the different republics into the world capitalist system, an increasingly difficult task in today's depression conditions. They simply use the banner of nationalism to wage a ruthless gang war over control of land and other resources.

It's the working people of former Yugoslavia who have the capacity and desire to end the bloodshed. Despite the murderous attacks and chauvinist campaigns conducted by rightist forces over the past two years, millions of working people remain deeply hostile to the notion that they must no longer live with, work alongside, and intermarry with those of different national origins, as they have done for decades.

Intervention by Washington, Paris, London, or Bonn, whether under the auspices of the United Nations or NATO, only makes it harder for the working class to unite and begin to fight in its own interests. It will most likely deepen the war and add more heavily the boot of imperialism to the challenges the toilers already face.

Working people around the world can best support our brothers and sisters in the former Yugoslavia by demanding: Stop the U.S. bombing now! All UN troops and warplanes out of the former Yugoslavia!

Support workers in battle

More than 70,000 Teamsters are walking the picket lines throughout the United States. Steelworkers at Allegheny Ludlum are on strike demanding a decent contract. Thousands of workers at Caterpillar Corp. refuse to give up their fight against the company's concessionary "final offer."

These important labor battles are an opportunity for building solidarity among workers in different industries as well as among students and other young people who want to support working-class struggles.

Over the last several years, manufacturers in the United States have been able to worsen working conditions and increase productivity at a staggering rate. Caterpillar tractors, for example, are now produced in a quarter of the time it took a few years ago. But that isn't enough for the employers. In the drive to grab more profit than their competitors, the capitalists demand more givebacks than ever from the workers. The bosses try to get workers to compete for jobs and see each other as the problem, pitting employed against unemployed, workers from one factory against another, truckers against rail workers, or steelworkers in the United States against those in South Africa or elsewhere. Often the union officialdom echoes the same divisive line, in the name of protecting "our" jobs at "our" company.

But it's the fights going on against the employers — not blaming imports or workers in other factories or countries — that point the way forward for the working class. The

strikes and skirmishes waged by truckers, steelworkers, auto workers, and others need the support of the entire working-class.

These struggles get a boost from the fact that for the first time in several years there is substantial hiring in basic manufacturing and transportation — including new layers of young workers being drawn into production. The bosses have stripped down and modernized their factories, speeded up assembly lines, and forced out many older workers. Now they need to run the downsized facilities longer hours with a younger workforce. But the young recruits on the assembly lines, and in the mines and rail yards increase the potential for new energy and combativity in labor battles.

The Teamsters and Allegheny Ludlum strikers, as well as Caterpillar workers and others fighting the bosses' concession demands, deserve massive solidarity. Every working person in the United States and internationally has a stake in the outcome of these fights.

Young people, whether workers, students, or unemployed, can join in these strike battles as well. Workers and youth should get out to the picket lines, invite strikers to speak on campuses and union meetings, and build big turnouts for the May 7 solidarity rally in Peoria, Illinois, and other events. Now is the time to give the employers what they didn't bargain for.

Contribute to New Int'l fund

Today workers, farmers, and youth in particular are repelled by capitalism's horrors — the international depression and resulting human misery, imperialist wars and the expansion of war in Europe, the rise of fascist movements, and assaults on democratic rights. Opposition to these developments, however, is not enough. The working class needs its own program and strategy.

New International is the communist magazine where readers can find such a program. The *Militant*, which is proud to include sales of *New International* as part of our international circulation campaigns, encourages *Militant* readers to contribute to the \$100,000 fund to aid the publication and distribution of this important Marxist magazine.

Since 1848, the modern working-class movement has fought to build the kind of leadership necessary to organize working people to win power from the capitalist exploiters and transform society along socialist lines.

The inaugural issue of the journal appeared in mid-1983, when workers and farmers governments in Nicaragua and Grenada had joined the Cuban revolution in charting a course toward the expansion of the socialist revolution in the Americas. The issue of *International Socialist Review* published in this week's *Militant* reprints the introduction to the latest *New International*, which explains how the workers

and farmers government in Nicaragua was defeated.

Thousands of people from the Americas to Africa and Asia, who looked to and fought alongside the Nicaraguan revolution, will value this contribution to the arsenal of working-class theory and practice.

The \$100,000 fund, which lasts until June 28, will help produce a total of 10 new magazines. These include three new issues of the French-language *Nouvelle Internationale*, three of the Spanish-language *Nueva Internacional*, and one of the Swedish-language *Ny International*.

The new editions will take up the evolution of the world capitalist crisis since the crash of the stock markets in 1987, the disintegration of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the mounting conflicts between the imperialist powers, and the prospects for building communist parties in the years ahead.

Dozens of volunteers around the globe are hard at work translating, editing, copyediting, and preparing these issues for publication.

New International is unlike any other magazine in the world today. The fund will make possible a significant expansion of its contents and reach across the globe. The advertisement on page 15 provides details. We urge you to contribute generously.

Teamsters stand firm

Continued from front page

pension fund and would receive far fewer benefits.

TMI is demanding a 20 percent wage cut for new hires, from \$14.45 an hour to \$11.90, while increasing to two years the amount of time it takes these workers to reach the top pay scale. The Teamsters are also fighting the practice whereby union freight haulers buy into or open nonunion operations, farming out work to a phony competitor that has lower wages and benefits.

Long hours, difficult conditions

Teamster truck drivers work long hours under difficult conditions. Harold Pegues, a striking Teamster with 21 years service at Consolidated Freight Systems (CSF) in Blaine, Minnesota, worked 88 hours the week before the strike began. This was nothing new, he said. More than 300 Teamsters are on strike against the company. Mechanics, who are members of the International Association of Machinists, join the striking workers on the picket lines as a show of support.

In addition to the long hours on the road, Pegues said, there's time spent waiting for equipment, hooking up truck sets, weighing in, and loading and unloading freight. Since truckers only get paid by the mile, he said, "when you break the wages down by the hour, we're not making an exorbitant amount."

Like other freight haulers, CSF maintains an extra board. This list regulates the work of low-seniority drivers, who, Pegues says, "never know when or where they're going to work." The company also expects drivers to work weekends. While this isn't mandatory, Pegues said, if you refuse "you end up with a truck you need to put in the shop, or with a bad load as punishment."

Teamsters around the country are preparing for a long fight, looking for ways to resist pressure from the bosses who are fighting back with scab trucks, court injunctions, club-wielding cops, and a big lie campaign in the press blaming the Teamsters for violence on the picket lines.

Workers at CSF here in Blaine have set up a big tented barbecue kitchen and shelter. Virtually all of the union's more than 320 members are participating in the eight-hour picket duty shifts. "It looks like the bosses have drawn a line in the sand," Carl Bergtson, an over-the-road truck driver for the past 26 years, said.

Bergtson and others had just read a letter signed by company president Robert Lawrence urging them to be more "flexible." "Let's go back to work," the letter urged, "and focus on beating the competition."

"It looks like they want to see if we have any guts left," Bergtson concluded. "But we're not down here just hanging around. We're fighting for our lives."

At ABF in Miami, striking Teamsters convinced 11 nonunion drivers to honor the picket lines. "We explained the issues in the strike and not one of them crossed," a member of Teamsters Local 390 said in an interview. "Later management accused us of using violence. They just don't understand what solidarity is."

Cop violence

While TMI and the media try to violence bait the union, strikers have been confronting a real campaign of violence by the police.

In Sauk Village, a small suburb of Chicago, witnesses say cops beat several Teamsters while their hands were handcuffed behind their backs. The cops deny this account. Six strikers were arrested. The company "didn't think the union was serious because there were only 100 strikers out there," Teamsters Local 710 shop steward Lew Dirickson said. "So we brought out 300."

Among the cops involved in the melee were police from nearby Glenwood, whose association is affiliated to the Teamsters. "I'm just trying to do my job," one officer said. "That always comes first."

In North Reading, a suburb of Boston, 50 cops armed with shields used dogs and clubs to allow Roadway, one of the larger freight haulers, to run a scab truck through a line of 150 pickets. Specially trained riot cops pulled off their badges as they moved against the strikers. "We're fighting for our rights and for our jobs, and they put police dogs on us," Teamsters Local 25 president George Cashman told the *Boston Herald*. "That's just wrong." Seven strikers were arrested.

TMI is offering the strikers a \$3 an hour wage and benefit increase if they agree to the concession contract. "Blood money" and "bribe" are two of the gentler terms many Teamsters use to describe this proposal. "We aren't out here just for us," a truck driver at CFS in Blaine said as he and fellow strikers huddled in the rain talking about the strike. "This is for the future, for our kids."

Jon Hillson is a member of the United Transportation Union in St. Paul, Minnesota. Mike Bodily in Salt Lake City, Utah; Andy Buchanan in New York City; Mike Fitzsimmons in Cleveland; Valerie Johnson in Boston; Janet Post in Miami; and Johanna Ryan in Chicago contributed to this article.

Corrections

An item titled "Rail workers protest union-busting plan," which appeared as part of the On The Picket Line column in the April 18 *Militant*, erroneously identified the city of St. Albans as being in New York State. St. Albans is located in northern Vermont.

Also in the April 18 issue, the article on the national Teamsters strike incorrectly identified the location of Consolidated Freight Systems. It is in Blaine, not Burnsville, Minnesota.

Framed-up coal miners submit to plea bargain

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

At an April 5 pretrial hearing in Charleston, West Virginia, in the frame-up of eight members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), federal prosecutor John Parr announced that seven of the eight had agreed to plead guilty to

prison and \$500,000 apiece in fines.

The plea bargain arranged by the U.S. attorney and accepted by Judge John Copenhaver on April 5 would drop all federal charges against the seven if they plead guilty in state court to destruction of property. They will probably have to admit to actions like throwing stones at company vehicles. The maximum sentence for this would be a one year prison term and a \$500 fine. They could also be ordered to pay "restitution" to Arch Minerals and the contractor York worked for.

Many UMWA members have maintained that the entire case of the Ruffner Eight, as the framed-up miners are known, was a fabrication. They have pointed out many irregularities and inconsistencies in the government's case. All the

to them a .357 handgun he owned.

After testimony from the UMWA members, two state cops, and an FBI agent, Judge Copenhaver ruled that "the defendant's statements were made by him knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily. The Court finds each of these statements are admissible."

Lowe's trial is scheduled to begin May 2.

Michigan nurses walk out over work schedules

Registered nurses at Allegan General Hospital in Allegan, Michigan, walked out March 7-21 in an attempt to gain control over their work schedules.

Hospital management insisted on its right to eliminate 12-hour shifts and make any other changes in work schedules that they decided were necessary after a contract was signed without consulting with the nurses' union, the Michigan Nurses Association.

As a result of the strike, management agreed to retain the 12-hour shifts that already existed and set up a bargaining committee of four administrators, four nurses, and one doctor to decide on future schedule changes.

Nurses approved a contract that included a \$350 signing bonus for full-time workers. Thirty-four voted to ratify, with 16 against. Nurses who voted no argued against the lump sum payment as a replacement for a retroactive wage increase that had previously been agreed to. They also said the contract did not go far enough in guaranteeing that 12-hour shifts would be maintained.

Telephone workers strike throughout New Zealand

Telephone workers throughout New Zealand marched off the job March 30 leaving operator services in disarray.

Workers voted at rallies around the country that morning for a week-long strike. The Communication and Energy Workers Union reported 88 percent support for the strike in a national ballot of 5,034 votes.

This is the first strike in the history of the telephone system in New Zealand. The workers are resisting demands by Telecom, their employer, for longer hours and reduced pay.



Militant/John Langford
Members of the United Steelworkers of America at the Titanium Metals Corp. (Timet) plant in Henderson, Nevada, have been on strike for more than six months. The company's contract proposal includes a \$1.00 pay cut and provisions allowing Timet to contract out any work done at the plant. The striking workers have gone without a pay raise for 13 years.

Immediately following the stop-work rallies, spirited pickets were established outside telephone exchanges. Management staff, attempting to keep phone services in operation, have been escorted through the picket lines by police.

At one site in Auckland, three workers were injured when a Telecom manager drove into the picket line.

Workers maintained a large 24-hour picket at the exchange in central Auckland throughout the strike. They were joined on the picket line by a delegation of firefighters, who have been threatened with job cuts and attacks on working conditions.

Telecom is partially owned by U.S. corporations Bell Atlantic and Ameritech. Pickets in support of the Telecom workers have been organized outside company offices in Chicago, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., by the Communication Workers of America.

Previously a division of the state-run Post Office, Telecom was estab-

lished as a state-owned corporation in 1987. In 1990 it was sold. Since 1987 the workforce has been reduced from more than 25,000 to around 7,000 today. Over the same period, gross profits rose tenfold from around NZ\$50 million to more than NZ\$500 million. (NZ\$1 = US\$6 cents).

The strike action comes in the midst of negotiations for a new contract. Telecom is demanding flexible work hours that would allow it to employ workers any 10 out of 14 days with just 48 hours notice. It also wants to remove premium payments for overtime and shift work.

A worker on the picket line in Auckland explained that this would mean a pay cut of NZ\$7,000 on a basic wage rate of NZ\$26,000 per year.

The following people contributed to this week's column: Steve Carson reporting from Charleston, West Virginia; Sandy Knoll in Fennville, Michigan; and Darryl Ingham in Auckland, New Zealand.

ON THE PICKET LINE

lesser charges in state court. In exchange, they are expected to testify for the government in the federal case against the remaining defendant, Jerry Lowe.

The eight miners are members of UMWA Local 5958 at the Ruffner mine in Logan County, West Virginia. All were on the picket line participating in the union's seven-month-long contract strike on July 22, 1993, when Eddie York, who was working for a nonunion subcontractor at the mine, was shot and killed leaving the property.

While state authorities declined to prosecute anyone for the murder of York, Arch Minerals Corp., the owner of the Ruffner mine, immediately took advantage of the killing to file a lawsuit against the UMWA for what it called a history of strike related violence.

Months after the July shooting, federal prosecutors filed charges against the strikers. Lowe was accused of firing the shot that killed York. The charges against him included illegal possession and use of firearms and interfering in interstate commerce. They carry a maximum sentence of 50 years in prison and a \$1 million fine. The other seven defendants, including local president Ernie Woods, were indicted as conspirators. If convicted they could have been sentenced to 25 years in

unionists, including those indicted, have stated they were in front of York's car when he was shot in the back of the head as he was leaving the mine in a convoy of company security vehicles.

Also at issue in this pretrial hearing was a defense motion to prevent statements given to the police by Lowe and other miners in the days immediately after the shooting from being introduced in the trial. Lowe, three other defendants, and two UMWA field representatives all testified that state police investigators repeatedly told them that all they were interested in was determining who shot York.

The miners testified that they were worried that even minor picket line infractions, such as throwing stones, would be used by Arch as an excuse to fire them.

Lowe was "interviewed" four times in four days. He testified that he was unable to read the first statement he signed the night of the shooting since he didn't have his reading glasses and the only available light was the dome light in the state police car. A day or two later he was interrogated at the state police barracks in Logan for four hours, according to members of his family. He also voluntarily complied with the cops' request to search his residence and turned over

LETTERS

Vinny McNerney

Two-hundred-fifty people packed a funeral service and paid tribute to Vinny McNerney in Liverpool, England, January 28. Vinny, who never recovered from debilitating injuries he suffered in a road accident four years ago, died on January 22, aged just 33 years.

Those in attendance, including many trade union and political fighters, commemorated the impact made in the working-class movement by this impassioned and energetic young fighter. A socialist from his youth, he was involved in many struggles, but it was the forces which formed the Communist League to which he became committed, joining its Manchester branch.

Known as a tireless promoter of the *Militant* newspaper, Vinny also participated in the construction team which built London's Pathfinder Bookshop. Attending the SWP-organized Oberlin international conference in 1988 was a highpoint for him. He made many friends in his work in solidarity with the Nicaraguan and South African revolutions, including amongst members of the FSLN and the African National Congress.

Tim Rigby, on behalf of the Communist League of Britain, addressing those assembled, stated, "Vinny hated capitalism and all its

barbarities and burned in his heart to end it. He never saw working people as victims, but as fighters with the potential and capacity to change the world. And that's how Vinny will be remembered — not as a victim, but as a fighter."

Pete Kennedy
Manchester, England

Tailhook scandal I

I'm writing to elaborate on a point in Pat Smith's excellent article in the April 4 issue on the Tailhook scandal and the U.S. military's role in perpetuating sexual harassment worldwide. In discussing military officials' active involvement in procuring prostitutes for U.S. servicemen overseas, she mentions that "opposition from the Saudi government during Washington's war against the people of Iraq made it impossible to set up similar services for troops in the Middle East."

In this context, it seems important to explain that the Saudi government did not do this out of any progressive tendency or out of any genuine concern for the well-being of women in the region. In fact, with regard to women's rights, the Saudi government is one of the most reactionary in the world, enforcing what has been termed "gender apartheid."

In Saudi Arabia women are not al-

lowed to drive or to travel without the written consent of their fathers or husbands and the government. According to Jan Goodwin, author of the recent book *Price of Honor: Muslim Women Lift the Veil of Silence on the Islamic World*, "freedom of movement is so restricted that many women sleep their days away." And the Saudi government and religious leaders are now trying to push through legislation that would prevent women from working, studying, or venturing into public at all. Similar efforts are being enacted in other Muslim countries by reactionary religious leaders who demagogically cite passages in the Koran as justifying the need to "protect women's honor" while depriving them of many democratic rights.

As Pat Smith points out, the increasing integration of women into the workplace since World War II has strengthened the positions of women and the entire U.S. working class. In some countries, though, women are in danger of being systematically denied any participation in the workforce, not to mention in education and politics.

If the Clinton Administration succeeds in pushing through proposed immigration legislation, the situation for women refugees will become even more harrowing. The "expedited exclusion" bill would

require that the claims of asylum seekers be adjudicated immediately upon arrival in the United States at the port of entry. This can be particularly difficult for women who must relate highly personal and frightening accounts of violence and persecution.

Marty Michaels
Washington, D.C.

Tailhook scandal II

Pat Smith wrote in her article about the Tailhook affair that "the working class has no interest in fighting for anyone's 'right' to be a part of Washington's repressive war machine." Smith made this statement to argue against feminists who claim that "the only way to end sexual harassment in the military is to fight for more female officers and the 'right' of women to hold combat positions." In studying this question I think that it is useful to look at the definition of the word *chauvinism* to gain a better understanding of what the military means to women.

Feminists have used the word *chauvinist*, or *male chauvinist* to describe men who held abusive or derogatory attitudes towards women. The movement apparently adopted this definition of the word as a result of the feminist struggles of the early 1970s. My 1967 Random House

Unabridged Dictionary gives this definition for the word *chauvinism*. "Excessive devotion to any cause, esp. zealous and belligerent patriotism or blind enthusiasm for military glory. Named after N. Chauvin, a soldier in Napoleon's army noted for loud-mouthed patriotism."

However, isn't "zealous and belligerent patriotism" a central ingredient in the armed forces of the United States? So, why argue for more women in the military, when we know that all soldiers are encouraged to develop *chauvinist* ideas? The struggle for women's rights is interlinked with the struggle to stop imperialist armies from murdering workers and farmers all over the world. The fact that the word *chauvinist* can be used both to describe belligerent patriotism, and abusive attitudes against women is a clear example of this parallel.

Steve Halpern
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Caterpillar workers call solidarity rally

BY PETER THIERJUNG

PEORIA, Illinois — Thousands of unionists from across the United States will converge here at the Civic Center May 7 for a "Rally for Workers Rights."

The United Auto Workers (UAW) international union has called the action to protest the union-busting activities of Caterpillar Inc., the world's leading manufacturer of earth moving and heavy construction equipment.

UAW members from around the country report that locals are chartering buses and union officials in East Peoria say that hotels here are already being booked up. Locals are also organizing car caravans.

UAW Local 974 president Jerry Brown announced plans for the "Rally for Workers Rights" at a March 28 protest by 1,000 UAW members and supporters at Caterpillar's corporate headquarters here. Some 100 members and officials of the United Mine Workers of America joined the protest, as did representatives of the United Rubber Workers and the Allied Industrial Workers union.

Brown also reported plans by the International Metalworkers Federation (IMF) to convene a meeting here May 5-6 of delegates from countries where Caterpillar has plants, including Australia, Belgium, France, Brazil, and South Africa.

"Instead of global competition, we need global cooperation," Brown told the crowd. "Every worker in the world deserves to make a decent living." The local president said the international meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss ways to coordinate a response to the corporate giant's antiunion offensive.

Caterpillar workers have been working without a negotiated agreement since April 1992 when a bitter five-month strike was called off by top union officials. The company had threatened to hire scabs if UAW members did not return to work. Since then, workers have faced harassment by bosses, denial of union rights, speed up, and worsening working conditions under a "final offer" imposed by the company.

The mass rally and IMF meeting come at a time of heightening tension in Caterpillar plants in Illinois, Colorado, and Pennsylvania.

Setbacks dealt the union by the company appear to be paying off handsomely at the workers' expense. Caterpillar workers now produce a tractor in six days, rather than 25, according to the January 15 *Economist*.

Workers report that business and profits are up. According to the March 17 *Dow Jones News*, Caterpillar officials claim "production and shipment volumes from UAW-represented facilities continue to meet or exceed plans. Quality and productivity levels continue to exceed pre-labor dispute levels."

Huge profit margins last year led to \$79 million in profit-sharing bonuses, mostly for management and salaried personnel, Larry Solomon, president of UAW Local 751 in Decatur, Illinois, said in an interview. Hourly workers received only a few hundred dollars compared with the \$1.6 million awarded Caterpillar's chairman, Donald Fites.

Workers resolve stiffened

Caterpillar's arrogance and greed has only stiffened the resolve of many workers to win a decent contract. There is a growing sense among many UAW members that the company's success has made it vulnerable. "I think it has been a hard battle," said Michael Masching of UAW Local 2096 in Pontiac, Illinois. "But we are now in the driver's seat."

Some 170 workers in Masching's local walked off the job March 7 after the company initiated disciplinary action against the entire second shift for chanting union slogans as they entered and left the plant. The company's refusal to allow workers to see their union stewards and file grievances sparked the job action. Workers returned to work the next day.

"We do have some rights, we're not living in a prison," Joe Grabovic, the second shift



Militant/Jim Garrison
Members of United Mine Workers of America join Caterpillar workers at March 28 protest of 1,000 at the company's headquarters in Peoria, Illinois.

committeeman, said. "If Caterpillar tries to take those rights away, we're going to stand up and fight for them."

Rallies by workers, as they prepare to enter and leave work, occur at other Caterpillar facilities and are spreading, said East Peoria Local 974 president Brown. "Union! Union! Union!" and "No contract, no peace" are the most popular chants.

Informational union meetings have become a regular weekly feature in several plants. Meetings are organized during lunch

breaks. At the East Peoria facility meetings have involved as many as 350 workers. Decatur Local president Solomon said he often stands on the back of a pick-up truck to conduct the meetings and answer questions. "These meetings have helped cement our unity," he said.

A movement to reject voluntary overtime is also growing across the Caterpillar chain. Participants in the March 28 Peoria protest cheered when union representatives announced that 90 percent of the workforce at

the Morton, Illinois, plant rejected voluntary overtime.

Contract Action Teams made up of volunteer union activists in each department and every shift continue to meet weekly to discuss the fight for a contract. A special team composed of 36 UAW members discharged for union activities at Caterpillar was formed at the end of last year. "We go out four or five mornings a week passing out union handbills at the plants," said Duane Burlingame of UAW Local 974. "We get a great response."

Company officials get nervous

Company officials have grown increasingly nervous in recent weeks in anticipation of a possible chain-wide walkout by the union. The notorious Vance security guards employed by Caterpillar during the 1991-92 strike have begun to reappear. Sixty were recently brought to East Peoria and more are expected to arrive soon. "Relations with the company are at an all time low," said Brown.

More than 13,000 UAW members struck Caterpillar for three days last November when the company suspended a union official. The national walkout, the first concerted action since the 1991-92 strike, showed that the workers had not been broken and renewed their self-confidence.

In a victory for the union, the National Labor Relations Board recently ruled that the November walkout was an "unfair labor practice" strike contrary to the company's assertions. According to U.S. labor law, it is illegal for an employer to replace workers with scabs during such a strike.

Peter Thierjung is a member of UAW Local 538 in Cleveland, Ohio. Jim Garrison, a member of UAW Local 110 in St. Louis, Missouri, contributed to this article.

Allegheny Ludlum strikers win support

BY TONY DUTROW
AND MICHAEL CHRISTOPHER

LOWER BURRELL, Pennsylvania — Well over 2,000 unionists, family members, and supporters attended a spirited rally on April 9 to mark the beginning of the second week of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) strike against Allegheny Ludlum Corp. The rally was held in a local high school football stadium. Members of USWA Local 1196 from the Brackenridge plant wore bright green ribbons. Strike T-shirts sported the slogan, "We Want More in '94!"

Steelworkers backed up their demand by distributing a union fact sheet comparing Allegheny Ludlum's profits per ton of steel produced. It was \$201 per ton in 1993 against \$22 per ton at Wheeling-Pittsburgh, the next highest, and \$12 per ton at U.S. Steel.

The rate of return on equity was 24 percent, which "places Allegheny Ludlum at the very highest levels of return on investment as compared to other domestic manufacturing companies," said the fact sheet. About 3,500 Steelworkers are on strike, most of them in western Pennsylvania. The walkout includes small plants in Connecticut, New York, and Indiana.

USWA negotiators say the company's wage offer is a single 50 cent per hour pay raise in the third year of a six-year contract. The company would also pay bonuses averaging \$500 per year over the life of the pact. A worker in the bleachers got up and hollered, "They spend that much for one dinner!"

A profit sharing plan was introduced in the recently expired contract. Workers noted that it only paid between \$150 and \$400 per year to the average employee. They are also upset at the company's manipulation of the profit sharing pool.

The pool didn't begin until after the company racked up \$56 million in profits. Then various deductions were made from it. Corporate scholarships for college used by em-

ployees' children were deducted from the pool. Awards workers get for cost-cutting suggestions also come out of this money.

At the rally, Bernie Kleiman, general legal counsel for the USWA International, blasted the company for refusing to fully fund the workers' pension plan. An agency of the U. S. government has cited the company for having one of the most dangerously underfunded plans in the country. "This," he said, "is like the fast buck artists at Sharon Steel who left 2,000 steelworkers without a pension. The money had been eaten up by the creditors in that company's bankruptcy proceedings."

Horrendous work schedule

The work schedule remains the hottest issue for most workers. Many workers are forced into the plant 12 hours per day for weeks in a row. Others are confronted with constant changes in schedule that mean union members cannot make firm family plans.

Participants at the rally pointed out that many of these problems would be eased if the company would simply hire more workers. This is especially true in the maintenance departments. Despite taking thousands of applications for employment in a highly publicized one-week period last spring, the company hired less than 30 new people for its main plant at Brackenridge.

Local 1196's union hall is located a block from the main gate of the Brackenridge plant. Union official Dennis Shutak described in an interview the support the strike is getting from the community. "Area businesses produced a T-shirt of their own which says, 'Our Community Supports Local 1196,'" he said, pointing to several workers who had them on. One of the shirts is displayed on the window of the restaurant across the street from the union hall.

Shutak invited all supporters to visit the union hall and the picket lines. Pickets are maintained at eight gates around the Brack-

enridge plant. Donated food, prepared meals from the union kitchen, and fire wood are delivered to the picket lines. A local business donated the burn barrels that help keep the pickets warm.

Striking steelworkers are concerned about a company attempt to sow divisions in the strike and to split supporters away from the union. Allegheny Ludlum sent all workers a letter claiming the USWA International forced the strike in order to win a union seat on the corporate board of directors. This claim has been picked up by the local news media. A union board member, or one supported by the union, was agreed to in USWA contracts signed with all other major steel companies. In an Open Letter, Allegheny Ludlum president Robert Bozzone argues that this demand would "interfere with and slow down our ability to continue to successfully manage the Company."

USWA District 10 director Andrew Palm said at the rally, "We want to shoot this idea down for the last time. This strike is not over a board seat. This union could not," he said, "go on strike over this issue."

Palm also attacked steel imports during his talk, a position that hampers the union from being able to win support for its fight from other workers around the world. "We're sick and tired of foreign slabs coming into this plant," Palm said. He complained especially about "contaminated stainless steel slabs from South Africa."

At this time the union is not negotiating with the company. Two days after the rally the company got a court injunction limiting pickets at the Leechburg plant. Workers had earlier blocked several trucks attempting to remove finished steel coils for delivery to customers.

Tony Dutrow is member of United Steelworkers of America Local 3196 in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania. Michael Christopher is a member of USWA District 10.